THE PLAYSTATION 3 MAGAZINE

PSM3

August 2007
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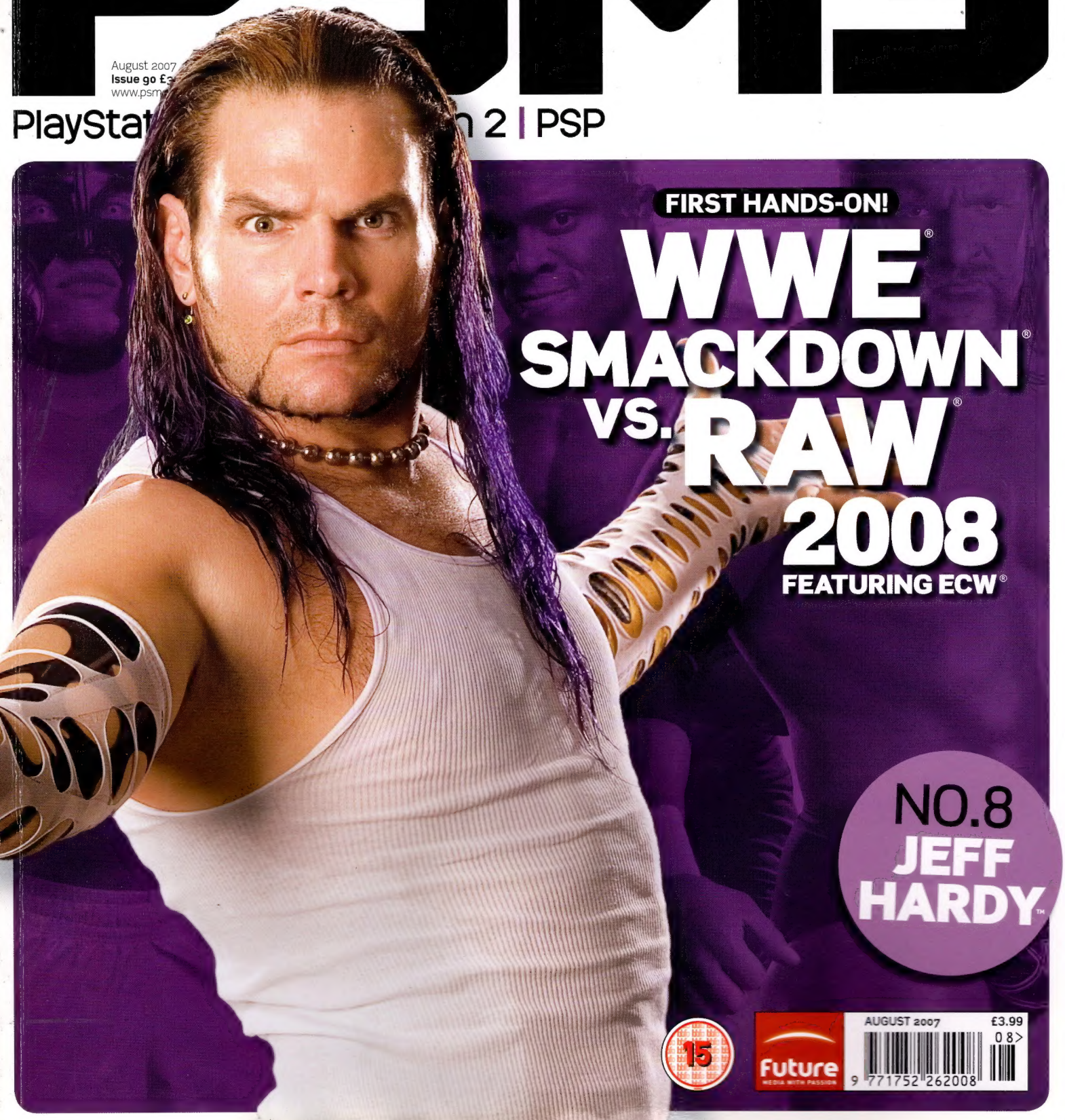

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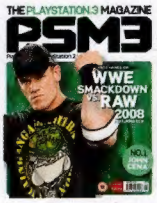
PSM3 Start

"Suddenly, PS3 is asking all the questions..."

Oddly, the most exciting screenshot of *Pro Evo 2008* – turn to page 30 to see more – is set in the pub. Not that we're obsessed (we are), but because it hints at a game experience unlike no other. 'Live' post-match reaction outside the ground? Atmospheric in-game cuts? Match highlights on in-pub TVs? Who knows. All that matters is that we're asking *questions*, rather than staring at formulaic, played-it-before dirge like *Fantastic Four* (on page 74). Odder yet, the company posing the most questions are formula-game masters EA – check out their incredible PS3 line-up from page 10. Oh, and if you're clutching a Golden WWE Belt cover, seek answers on page 28.



In the making of this issue of PSM3...
1,345 humans destroyed
Nine covers
One massive headache at making nine covers

Daniel Dawkins Editor
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

The PSM3 Promise

The sharpest opinions
Every bit of the magazine is dedicated to giving you more information. If we're worried that a feature in a game isn't working, we'll not only tell you about it, but we'll have a word with the developer too.

The biggest games
Fact is, if a game makes it into the pages of PSM3 then it's something worth knowing about. PSM3 says no to lazy page fillers and boring 'me too' games.

The richest detail
We finish every game we review. Our secrets are the result of us playing the game and finding them ourselves. We've got what you want to know and tell you how you want to hear it.

The most committed videogame mag team
The PSM3 team live and breathe PlayStation. There's no game we haven't played and there's no end to our quest for knowledge and gaming greatness.

The best DVD action
We've got the best DVD in the business. We cram it with the best PS3, PS2 and PSP games each and every month. For free.

Three to read first...

"In-game pubs? You don't know the half of it just yet..."
The excitement of **Pro Evo 2008** is enough to drive us to drink – page 30

"The multi-player hit of PS3's infancy?"
Warhawk playtest excites – page 36

"Moves are more weighty, it looks gorgeous... could be an event"
Why **Smackdown 2008** might get the series back to its best – page 20

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The PlayStation 3 Magazine

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Live hands-on reports on EA's next-gen line up. The lowdown on *Rock Band*, *Burnout Paradise*, *Army Of Two* and loads more.

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We get an exclusive hands-on with the *Smackdown Vs Raw 2008* on PS3. It could be the one to save the series...

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80 Predicting the future of games SPECIAL FEATURE
The art of figuring out the future of gaming – and earning big bucks – investigated.

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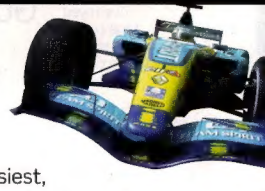

"The anal probe now homes in on targets"

Destroy All Humans comes to PS3 and is as mad as ever – page 52

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Flippable DVD action

DVD Highlights New PS3, PS2 and PSP videos

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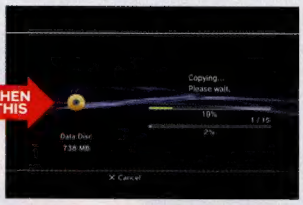
hours of PlayStation 3 PSP video
HD FOOTAGE
RATCHET AND CLANK
TOOLS OF DESTRUCTION
PS3's best-looking game. Fact
15
PLOT SHOCKER
HAZE
Must-see HD footage of PS3's ultimate co-op shooter
ALL-NEW! Flip disc for HD movies + PS3/PSP game saves + HD screens + more...
A B
FEATURING Uncharted: Drake's Fortune | Call Of Duty 4 | Transformers | Burnout Paradise
Skate | Making of Oblivion | Pain | Army Of Two | Chronicles Of Riddick | Blacksite: Area 51 | More

SIDE 2: HOW TO

Copy your HD files onto your PS3

Step one
You need to download the hi-def movies onto your hard drive to view them properly. Insert Side B of the disc into your PS3, then click across to Video on the cross-media bar.



Step two
Select the disc and press △. Choose Display All from the menu, and highlight the trailers you want to Copy and download.

Step three
The trailers will download to your hard drive in a few minutes or less. When they're done, they'll appear as rolling video thumbnails – click ⊗ to play your chosen HD movie. Enjoy.

PS3, PS2 & PSP footage

SIDE A: DVD FOOTAGE Loads of goodies for you to settle down in front of this month. Check out *Burnout Paradise*, *Skate*, *Blacksite: Area 51* and *Ninja Gaiden Sigma* among others. See the future of gaming today.

Haze
PS3's best-looking shooter is only just around the corner. Watch this trailer and get excited.

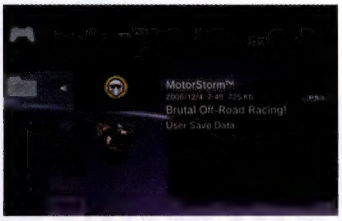
Call Of Duty 4
In which Activision bring *CoD* to the modern day. See present-day warfare on your PS3 now.

+ Heavenly Sword | **Riddick** | SOCOM | **Fracture** | Brothers In Arms | **More**

PS3 HD video files

SIDE B: PS3 HD FILES Our HD files – which need to be downloaded to your hard drive (see above) – are a must-see. This month, wrap your eyes round *Ratchet* PS3, *Medal Of Honor Airborne*, *Team Fortress 2*, *Pain* and loads more.

Ratchet & Clank
Perhaps the most beautiful game yet seen on PS3. Get a load of *Ratchet*'s hi-def adventure.



PS3 Game Saves
To get 100% complete PS3/PSP game saves (including *Resistance*) see pg16 for full details.

+ Assassin's Creed | **Endwar** | Drake's Fortune | **Transformers** | Folklore | **More**

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Hard news, all PlayStation action

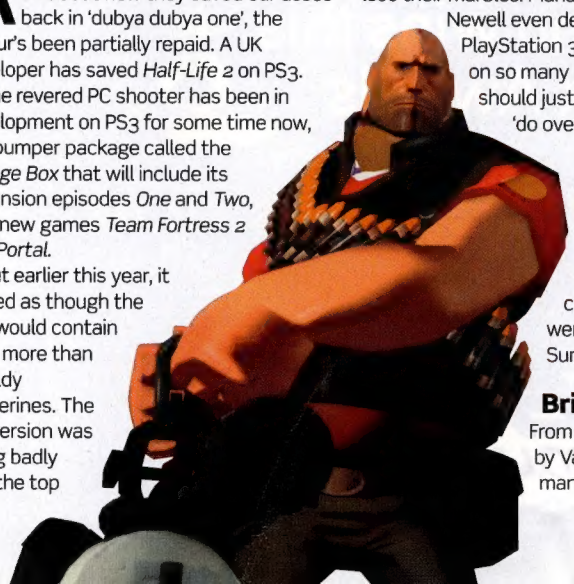
UK developer saves Half-Life on PS3

Original developers Valve say they should 'cancel' PS3 and do a 'make over'

After years of Americans blathering on about how they saved our asses back in 'dubya dubya one', the favour's been partially repaid. A UK developer has saved *Half-Life 2* on PS3.

The revered PC shooter has been in development on PS3 for some time now, in a bumper package called the *Orange Box* that will include its expansion episodes *One* and *Two*, plus new games *Team Fortress 2* and *Portal*.

But earlier this year, it looked as though the box would contain little more than mouldy tangerines. The conversion was going badly and the top brass at US developers Valve appeared to lose their marbles. Managing Director Gabe Newell even declared: "The PlayStation 3 is a total disaster on so many levels... they should just cancel it and do a 'do over'."



If Valve had been handling the port, there's a good chance they'd have cancelled it. But luckily, conversion duties were being handled in Surrey at EA UK.

Brit parade

From a recent briefing by Valve program manager Erik Johnson, it seems our chaps have done us proud:

"It's a tough console to develop for. We've definitely had a difficult time," he said. EA UK have done an awesome job, though, it's come together really well."

He added that developing the game on other platforms has gone more smoothly: "We have a huge code base for the source engine on PC, and the Xbox 360 is more or less a PC so we can use the same code. But the PlayStation 3 is definitely not a PC."

Erik even suggested new developers would steer clear of PS3. "It's going to be difficult for them to produce 360 and PS3 games simultaneously," he said. "It's a ton of engineering work and mostly the sum doesn't equal the amount of work."

Cross-platform development not worth the effort? Not according to Factor 5 chief Julian Eggebrecht (currently hard at work on the stunning-looking *Lair*). "If you create

What's in the Box?
Hang on, you're saying. *Team Fortress 2* and *Portal*? What be they? Well, *TF2* is a sequel to a PC Quake mod, a multi-player strategic FPS. *Portal*, meanwhile, is a confusing-looking FPS-come-puzzler, where you blow portals into walls to negotiate your way across hazard-filled rooms. Should be good.

ON THE DISC
See Team Fortress 2 on the disc now
Side B

Buy a bargain Buy *Half-Life 2* for PS3 and you'll get expansion packs and two new games included in the package.

your game on the PlayStation 3, then it's pretty easy to port to the 360," he told us.

He said problems could occur when developers haven't considered the PS3's multi-core nature from the outset. "The PS3 is all about streamlining separate memory pools. All the advantages of the PS3 turn into disadvantages if you don't start by making your game on the PS3."

It's an approach being taken by UK developer Free Radical, who's stunning looking *Haze* dispels the myth that Xbox 360 is more powerful. "PS3 has a lot of processing power, but it's locked away," reveals Doak, "But everything's going to be multi-core. And everybody is going to have to learn to make software for that as it's the big challenge everyone faces". PS3's future might not be orange. But it is bright.

Pub EA | **Dev** EA | **ETA** November

Brit hot — The best UK-developed titles

Five technologically superior PS3 games that proudly fly the flag for Queen and country

Haze

Nottingham-based codies Free Radical Design are showing Uncle Sam how it's done with *Haze*, their first next-gen title. Set in the year 2048, this political shooter revolves around a chemical that enhances soldier's abilities. Features fully modelled jungles and some of the flashiest special effects on PS3.

LittleBigPlanet

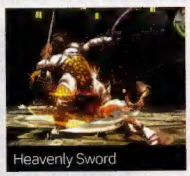
Is it a game, a design tool or an executive toy? We've no idea, but if anything's going to make user-created media fun, it's this quirky build-your-own-game kit. Guildford-based developers Media Molecule got a standing ovation at GDC earlier this year, so we reckon they're on to something good.

Burnout Paradise

Criterion Games are also based in Guildford (there must be something in the water). Still lightning fast, now open-world, the latest *Burnout* is already shaping up to be something special. You can read more about it on page 13, but Criterion's extensive experience with PS2 has meant they've hit the ground running on PS3.

Home

Sony have big plans across the globe for their PS3 virtual community, but the development started in the UK as a lobby area for an undisclosed PS2 game. Whether it'll capture the imagination of the MySpace generation remains to be seen, but the technology behind the curtain is certainly impressive.



Heavenly Sword

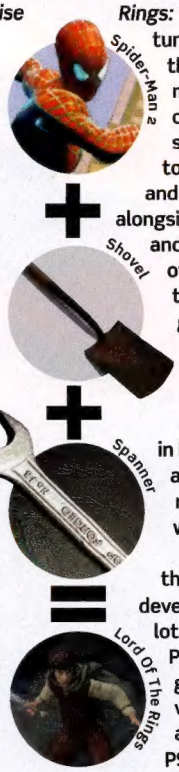
Although development is taking longer than expected, a recent glimpse at the code revealed that creators Ninja Theory of Cambridge are still on track to create one of the most stunning PS3 titles around. With motion capture courtesy of Andy 'Gollum' Serkis, expect some eerily effective performances.

ON THE DISC
PS3 launch games reviewed on the disc this month
PS3/Reviews

The Opinionator

"There will be good PS3 movie licenses eventually"

PS3 isn't yet six months old, and it's already hosted three big budget, big disappointment movie conversions: *Spider-Man 3*, *Pirates Of The Caribbean 3* and *Fantastic Four: Rise Of The Silver Surfer*. While it's easy to tut at such generic, merchandised pap clogging up the shelves so soon into the PS3's life, just remember there are greater forces at work than a cynical need to rush a product onto the high street.



The third base

In the early days, PS2 had its fair share of licensed shovelware. Things improved, however, when the base level of developer skill grew – or rather, when the generic middleware programming software tools bought 'off the shelf' by most developers reached new highs. For example, a host of great games spawned from Criterion's PS2 Renderware tools, including the original *PES*, plus *GTA3* – well over 12 months into the console's life. It was years until great licensed games like *Spider-Man 2* and *Lord Of The Rings: The Two Towers* turned up. These things take time – movie licenses can often be time-sensitive, needing to be developed and released alongside the film itself, and good games often take longer to create than good movies. It's only natural that licensed games, released so early in PS3's lifespan, aren't able to cut runny mustard with a chainsaw.

The upshot is that, in time, developers will do a lot more than make PS2-style licensed games on PS3, with token crisp and shiny visuals. PS3 is a complex, powerful, multi-core, beast, and hard to program for – see page 8 – but for developers brave enough to tame it, we'll have movie games worthy of their licenses. **Steve Bailey**

Myth-Buster

SEEN THIS? HD-DVD will win the high-storage-format war

THE TRUTH The figures say it won't. Not only does Blu-ray currently dominate 64% of the HD movie rental market in the USA (a figure that's grown consistently since Christmas), with backing by the world's major movie studios – including 20th Century Fox, Disney, Columbia and Paramount - but rental giant Blockbuster has recently dropped all support for HD-DVD, with retail giant Target rumoured to follow. Above all, PS3 comes installed with a Blu-ray player, and while sales aren't currently stellar, we can't forget how PS2 made DVDs widely accessible and popular. The difference in quality between the formats may be negligible to the average punter, but it may be a choice they'll never have to make – Blu-ray will have already won.

Thrill List

The latest news on PlayStation's hottest games, every issue

1 The Agency
Online spy shooting

Sony's new online title takes the form of an all action shooter – with both first and third person elements – giving you control of an elite agent. Your abilities will constantly improve as you play online and you'll even be able to capture non-playable 'operatives'. These will provide you with intel for missions, and even build weapons and vehicles for you.

Sony promise that the game will be designed so players can jump in and out of the action quickly, with little fuss. Expect to see lots simple firefights between gamers, alongside the more taxing co-op story mission.

Pub Sony | **Dev** Sony | **ETA** Winter

Two to tango Co-op play between spies will be crucial to the online experience.

"A recent playest really blew us away"
Rock Band page 14

"Non-playable ops will build weapons for you"

Taskmaster Kevin Eissen is the main bloke in the game. The Taskmaster lady is from ParaGON, a mercenary gang.

2 The Simpsons
Current puns

The level titles here are certainly interesting – we've seen Bartman Begins, Medal of Homer, God of Wharf and Shadow Of The Colossal Donut. The accompanying levels do mildly parody their namesakes (The colossus level sees you scaling a giant beast while Kent Brockman provides commentary from a helicopter above) but we were disappointed to see that the Medal Of Homer level wasn't a first person shooter – we've been wanting to put a cap in Burns' ass for years.

Pub EA | **Dev** EA | **ETA** September

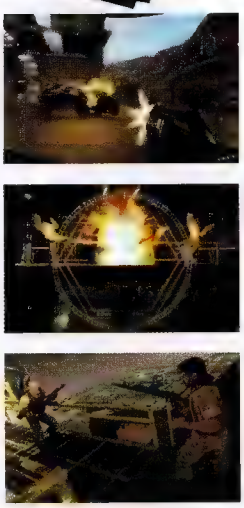
3 Haze
Best shooter on PS3

After seeing a 20-minute in-game demo on genuine PS3 hardware, we can confirm it looks stunning, with maybe the best smoke effects in any game ever. Four-player co-op looked – and we've thought about this – a serious rival to *Halo 3*, and it's probably better looking than Bungie's recent online Beta Test. With the prospect of drop-in, drop-out online co-op play, frantic buggy sections, plus a genuinely intriguing adult plot, this could be one of the best games on PS3. Full stop. We're a bit worried about the release date though...

Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Free Radical | **ETA** November

4 Mercenaries 2
New characters

A recent visit to Pandemic gave us our first look at some of the new playable characters in *World In Flames*. In addition to Swede Mattias, you can also play as Chris Jacobs, a former US marine who couldn't deal with the rules, and Jennifer Mui, a beautiful British femme fatale only in it for the money. We've seen hints that there may be a fourth character, another female. The first game had Han Solo as an unlockable – fingers crossed we'll play with Princess Leia's Boussh in the sequel.



Haze and Mercenaries 2 **This second wave of PS3 software should dispel any doubts late 2007.**

Pub EA | **Dev** Pandemic Studios | **ETA** November

5 Team Fortress 2
Quick hands-on impression

Team Fortress was one of the best things to come out of the *Quake* mod scene on PC – an online multi-player Capture The Flag game. Included in the *Half-Life 2* Orange Box our our playtest proved that the game has lost none of it's charm. As before, each player picks a character from several classes, each with unique abilities. Engineers build, medics heal and snipers... well, guess. Should be ace.

Pub EA | **Dev** EA/Valve | **ETA** Nov

ON THE DISC
Rock Band will be on a forthcoming disc

PS3 REPORT

Rock Band rocks hard

Best. Music. Game. Ever

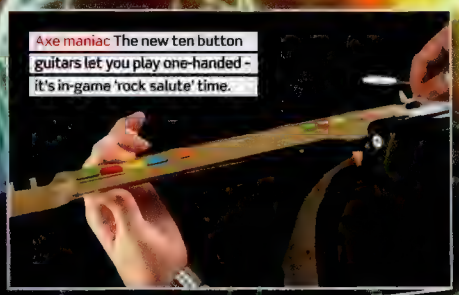
Worried? Pah. Harmonix, creators of *Guitar Hero*, are set to obliterate 'difficult second album' fears with *Rock Band*. Our recent guitars/drums/mics on playtest in the USA blew us away – it's the rhythm-action game to end all others.

How does it work? A small hub plugs into the PS3 with four leads: two for guitars, one for the microphone and one for the drums. The tiny, four-pad electronic drumkit is particularly funky, looking like a prop from a Fisher Price-sponsored Duran Duran tribute band.

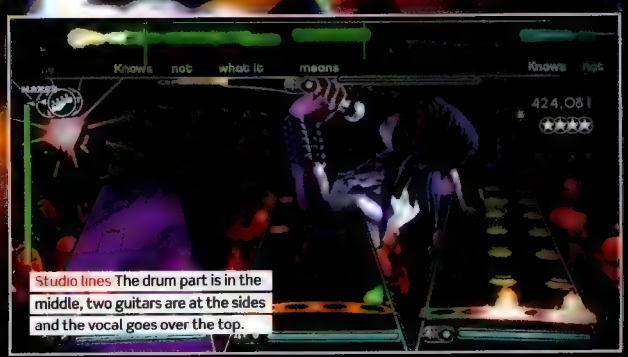
On screen, there are three bars to watch, the drum pattern sandwiched between the two guitars, and a *SingStar*-style pitch and lyrics bar at the top.

It's far more accurate than *SingStar*, though – *Rock Band* has speech recognition software, so accusations of vowel play will be bottled off stage. For those about to rock, we salute you.

Mike-u-like *Rock Band* can 'detect speech, so your singer can't cheat by just making random sounds.



Axe maniac The new ten button guitars let you play one-handed – it's in-game 'rock salute' time.



Studio lines The drum part is in the middle, two guitars are at the sides and the vocal goes over the top.

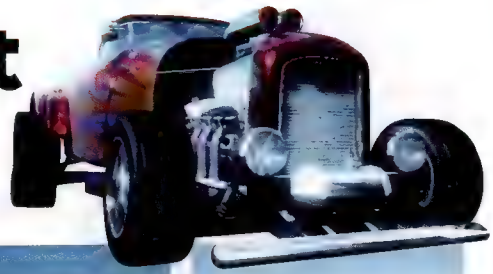
A drum do We cringe at how expensive a drum kit set might be, but hope it'll be worth it.

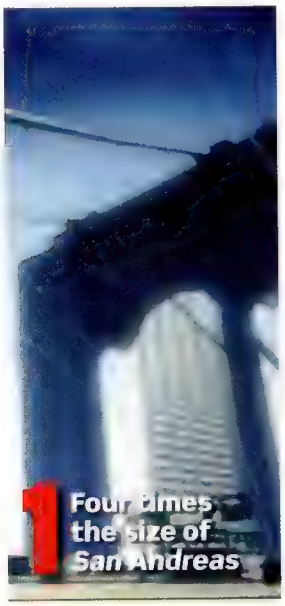
"Free Rad would like a 'Splitters sequel...
TimeSplitters on PS3? page 14

PS3 REPORT

Five reasons why Burnout Paradise is race heaven

Hands-on with Criterion's free-roaming speedster...





1 Four times the size of San Andreas

2 Crash porn you control

3 Let rip in Crash mode

4 Beat the *Burnout* team times

5 Newspaper cam

Welcome to Paradise City, where the grass is green and the tarmac's pretty. *Burnout Paradise* features a driveable area of around **(1) 170 square kilometres** – roughly four times the area of *GTA: San Andreas*. Happily **(2) the trademark twisted metal crash porn is still in full effect,** but with one important difference. If you can regain control of your car (by accelerating when your wheels touch the ground) you can drive out of the crash without suffering a time penalty. The game is free-roaming so **(3) every junction is a potential crash junction.** Even if you're in the middle of a race, you can always flip into Crash mode and let rip. **(4) The streets are named after *Burnout* team members** and each one features their personal best time for travelling from one end to the other. If you beat their times, everyone on your friends list will be notified. If they subsequently beat your time, *you'll* be notified. **(5) Our favourite addition is the 'newspaper cam'.** If your racing opponent has a PlayStation Eye camera, it'll take a pic of his face every time you smash his car into a wall, so you can build up a library of pics of angry rivals. Ah, paradise...

Pub EA | **Dev** Criterion Games | **ETA** December

The PSM3 Wrong-Righter

EMAIL PSM3 @
Spotted some Bertie Bollax in PSM3? Tell us:
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Rubbing the wax-hot polish of truth over past issues

TOMB RAIDER PREDICTION ☑ RIGHT

Ooh, almost forgot this. In issue 79, we revealed that the sequel to *Tomb Raider Legend* would be a "remake of the original PSone game on PS2 and PSP using the graphics engine from *Legend*." Frankly, we couldn't have been more right if we'd travelled to the future, bought the game and brought it back with us. We didn't, though.

PSM 79 page 18

A LARA GOOD INFO

the other one. And I hear that the [illegible] whispered about next **Tomb Raider** will in fact be a remake of the first PSone game on PlayStation 2 and PSP, using the graphics engine from *Legend*. Lots more on this one next month. Until then...

HAIRCUT CONFUSION ☒ WRONG

In issue 88's *Dead Men* feature we referred to Lynch as having a 'baldy mullet'. But it the style is actually known as a 'skullet'. It took an email from a pedantic and hair-aware reader to make us realise that we'd made a grave mistake.

HAIR-RAISING

PSM 88 page 22

The air's thick with smoke, bullets and bad words. Kane (scar) and Lynch (baldy mullet) are going about their business like a machine, one [illegible] covering fire [illegible] boot

HAZE REDESIGN ☑ RIGHT

Centuries ago, in the issue we morphed from PSM2 to PSM3, we predicted that Free Radical's *TimeSplitters* follow-up *Haze* would be subject to a "cosmetic revamp", with "cooler soldiers and equipment". And we were right. The generic-looking Mantel grunts from the original trailer have been replaced with slick futuristic soldiers wearing fluorescent yellow glass helmets.

JUST A-HAZE-ING

PSM 78 page 16

exclusivity deals. Free Radical [illegible] me their incredible looking shooter **Haze** will be subject to a cosmetic revamp, with the Mantel soldiers receiving new, 'cooler', more high-tech equipment. Finally, EA's next-gen [illegible]

ON THE DISC
See teaser footage of *Fallout 3* on next month's disc

Advertorial

Taking back control

The pad that's got other controllers on the run

Every discerning gamer needs a good game pad in their hands. It doesn't matter whether you own a PS3, a PS2 or a PC, or if you prefer first-person shooters to flight simulators. Fortunately the Run'N'Drive from Thrustmaster has all bases covered.

Compatible with PS3, as well as PS2 and PCs, the revolutionary game pad's signature feature is its optical wheel, located on the D-pad. Fitted with an optical sensor for extra precision, you can use the wheel to take corners cleanly in racing games such as *MotorStorm*; zoom in on enemies for the perfect shot in *Resistance*; hit an unstoppable winner in *Virtua Tennis 3*; or perform death-defying stunts in flight sims. An automatic centering system and two sensitivity modes give you further control. We're also impressed with the ability to map and save two types of controller configuration, with your buttons, triggers, mini-sticks and optical wheel settings stored even when the Run'N'Drive is unplugged.

This makes it the perfect pad for games such as *GTA*, where you're constantly switching between running on foot and getting behind the wheels of vehicles. It means there's no longer any need to pause the action to check the button config for different sections of a game.

The Run'N'Drive's unique design means it's comfy even after a long session. Yet you'll still find all the standard mini-sticks, D-pads and buttons of other controllers, plus three buttons on each shoulder – one pair being analogue controls perfect for acceleration and braking.

Putting the fun back into your PlayStation gaming comes at a wallet-friendly price too: the Run'N'Drive is available at GAME stores for only £19.99 as well as all good retailers. Don't miss out on the chance to gain the competitive gaming edge.

AVAILABLE FROM YOUR NEAREST GAME STORE

FOR A DEMO PLEASE GO TO WWW.THRUSTMASTER.COM

THRUSTMASTER

The Insider

He's the man who knows too much...

The rumours have been circulating for months, but internet sources suggest that **PSP2** will make its debut at E3 in 2007. Be warned – it's a redesign of the original, not an entirely new machine. The slim-line version looks set to come packing a built in camera, an 8GB internal flash drive and a UMD loading slot similar to PS3's tray-less design. Pray that they fix the analogue nubbin.

One prayer that's close to being answered is **Resident Evil 5**, with a trailer anticipated any time soon – though we understand it may slip past E3. The net is awash with rumours that Steve Van Wormer will play lead character, Billy Coen (lead character in *Resi 0* on GameCube). All will be revealed soon. **Capcom** are also working on a top-secret, AAA-quality, remake of an old 8-bit classic for PS3 – you'll have to keep guessing, since my lips are sealed. One game that is definitely coming to PS3 is **Fallout 3**. Bethesda – the folk behind the gigantic RPG *Oblivion* – are bringing a sequel to the ancient PC classic our way. The game was famed for its classy blood-and-guts comic book action, open-ended structure and Mad Max-influenced atmosphere, and we can expect much of the same from the next-gen version.

"Doak would like to make a sequel to *TimeSplitters*"

Sony may start charging for the **PlayStation Network**. In a recent interview Eric Lempel, the director of PlayStation Network operations, hinted that "while the differing factor between Xbox Live and PSN is that Sony aren't charging for their service" this could change in the future. Damn. Even more depressing is the news that **GTAIV** won't have episodic content on PS3 as such extras will be Xbox 360 exclusive. Take-Two have reportedly been paid up to $50m for the pleasure by Microsoft. Arse. But those Bill Gate's sympathisers can get stuffed because PS3 is getting **Unreal 3** as a (timed) exclusive. After settling their law suit with Immersion, **Sony** look set to insert rumble function into pads again. The smart money is on the new controller debuting before 2008, but no price/photos/design have been revealed.

Finally, there *may* yet be a high-def version of **TimeSplitters 2** on PS3. Dave Doak – the brains behind *Haze* and the *'Splitters* series – was recently quizzed by PSM3 as to whether they'd reconsider releasing it on the PS Store, remixed in 720p, for, say, under a tenner. Doak was receptive to the idea, but invited people to 'Lobby Sony', adding, excitingly, that he'd like to make a next-gen sequel to *'Splitters* ("I think there will be – yeah," he said). "Will it be more like *'Splitters 2* than (the not very good) *Future Perfect*?" quizzed PSM3. "Yes – provided EA have nothing to do with it," half-joked Doak, candidly. More next month, rumour fans...

Robot bore Developers Free Radical recently bemoaned how everyone wants monkeys in their FPS *Haze*.

"Aggressive players draw more attention"
Army Of Two page 16

PS2 REPORT

Former PES European finalist McLeans up our league

Winner of PSM3's Online league has one foot on the plane to Euro Champs in Seville

After a series of gruelling matches, featuring some of the best players in the *PES* Rankings universe, talented Scotsman Rob McLean has won PSM3's prestigious online league. Since being robbed of the European *PES5* Championship in 2006, Rob is on track to top the overall *PES* Rankings and represent the UK in the Euro finals in Seville – all courtesy of our inflated championship points, with the PSM3 league winner being awarded 24 times the regular amount of rankings points.

It was a close-run thing, mind. An equally adept 'Conflict' pushed Rob down to the wire and, despite losing 4-2 to Mr McLean, he still went on to win 10 of his 15 games quite convincingly. Well played, fella. A special mention goes out to the ironically name 'No_Mercy' who, despite losing *all* his games still played more matches than some of the souls looking down the league at him. That's the spirit, soldier. Keep plugging away.

Thanks to everyone that took part in the event – we couldn't have done it without you. It's not too late to stake a claim for a place in the *PES6* European Finals, you know, so keep it PSM3 to find out when our next Super League will be kicking-off – the best *PES* Rankings tournament for big points.

McLeaning Up Rob (in the blue Rangers shirt), with Japanese *PES* champ 'Kamikaze' on his left.

PES RANKINGS

Results PSM3 Super League #2 – Top Five

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Goal Diff	Points
Rob McLean	15	13	01	01	53	16	37	40
Conflict	15	10	01	04	45	26	19	31
Mr Jackson	13	08	00	05	24	31	-07	24
FullBack	08	07	01	00	30	09	21	22
balonga1	12	07	01	04	31	26	05	22

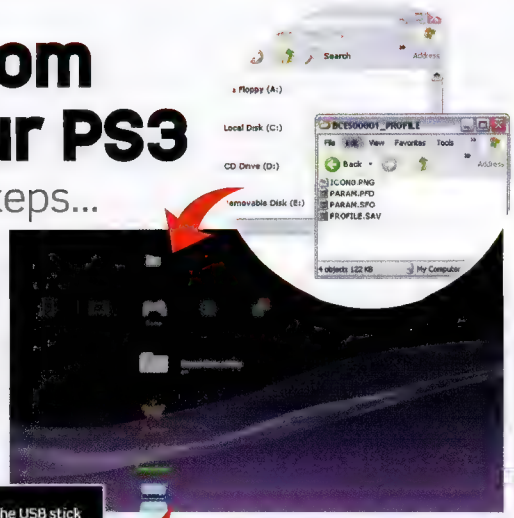
ON THE DISC
Watch Army Of Two footage of this month

PS3 ADVICE

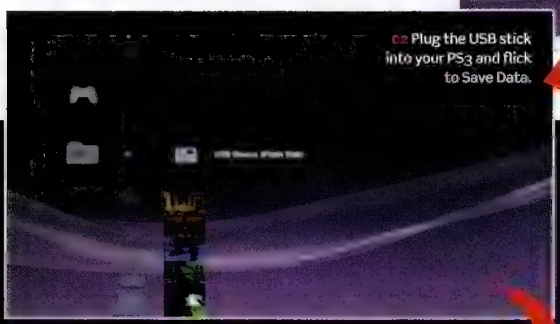
Copy saves from our DVD to your PS3

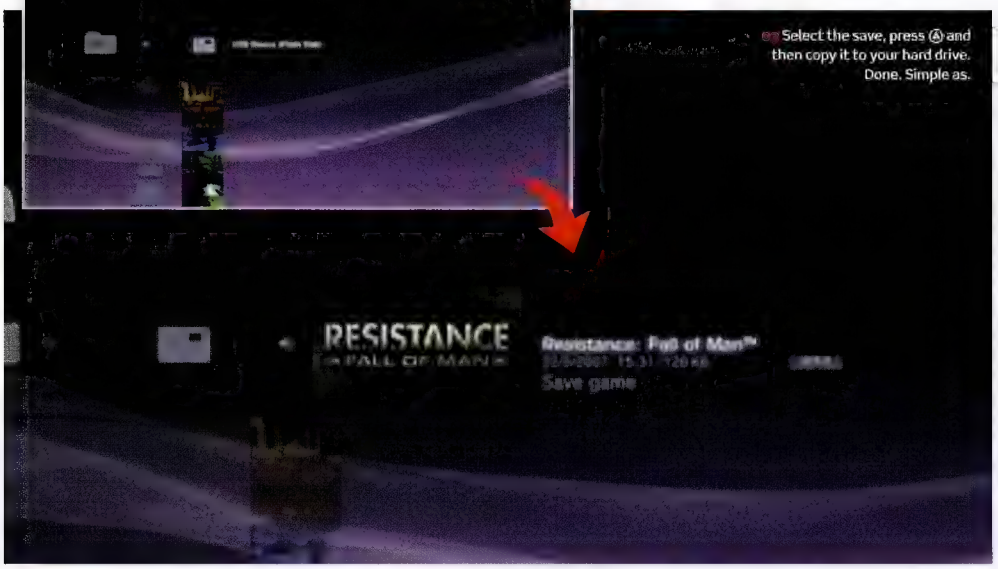
Just follow these easy steps...

So not only are we giving you HD movies to copy to your PS3, but now we're filling side B of our disc with save games. Can't be arsed finishing *Resistance* 100%? Don't bother – just copy our save game and enjoy having everything unlocked. It's easy, although the save games we feature on the disc will only be compatible with the European versions of their respective games. Other than that, anyone can enjoy them. Here's how...



01 Using a Mac/PC, copy the files from the DVD to a folder called 'PS3' on a USB memory stick.




03 Select the save, press Ⓐ and then copy it to your hard drive. Done. Simple as.
RESISTANCE
FALL OF MAN
Resistance: Fall of Man™
Save game

Stick man challenge

Who needs PS3? This is more fun...

Last month's Stick Man Challenge, as a massive one of you guessed, was *Silent Hill 4: The Room*. This month's is maybe marginally/loads easier – which famous game baddie carries a chainsaw? Figure that out, and you're probably there. More stick-based malarky next time.

PS3 REPORT

Two's company

World-first hands-on with promising co-op shooter *Army Of Two*

We've been excited about *Army Of Two* since our exclusive unveiling in PSM3#78, and the good news is, bar some targeting issues, it's living up to the hype. After designing our weapons (see 'Lock, Stock'), we got stuck in...

Initially, *Gears Of War* casts a heavy shadow over proceedings. The run for cover, pop-and-drop dynamic is all present and correct, and you'll quickly find yourself barrelling into walls as bullets chip away concrete inches from your face. Unfortunately the lumbering gameplay has also been cloned, with a sluggish targeting reticule initially giving us some grief. Dig into the game however, and you discover a co-op

"Favourite anti-grav racer is back with a bang"
WipeOut Pulse page 18

Rios (left) and Salem, the Army Of Two

Two to tango Co-op play is vitally important, but it probably didn't need both of you to kill this guy.

mode that features far more sophisticated interplay between players. The most visible or aggressive player will draw the attention (and bullets) of the baddies. This player glows red, reflecting his level of visibility to the enemy. Aggro levels can switch constantly – if one player is getting too much heat, he can ease off the trigger while player two goes gun crazy, drawing the enemies' attention to let the original player sneak round the back. Using this tactic to destroy a rocket tower proved very satisfying. Co-op where you actually have to co-operate? Now there's a novelty.

Pub EA | **Dev** EA | **ETA** November

Features Five great new innovations

How the Army Of Two take on all-comers

Lock, Stock

Designing your gun is a blast. Starting from a number of base units, you can change barrels and stocks, add scopes and even change the colour of your weapon. A gold AK47 will increase your aggro, but damn, it looks good.

Red Mist

If you manage to keep the aggro on you for long enough without dying, you'll go into Overkill mode. The aggro'd player becomes hugely powerful for a short time, while your partner becomes a fully invisible predator. Smart.

Faking It

If having all the aggro is a bit much, you can play dead when your health is low to allow the other player to take the heat off. Be warned that while in this prone state, enemy soldiers may try and write 'prat' on your forehead in marker..

Heavy Flow

If you get badly shot, you'll need some help from your partner. After dragging you to safety, they'll need to perform a minigame to save your life. One involves stuffing tampons into the bloody bullet holes. How very charming.

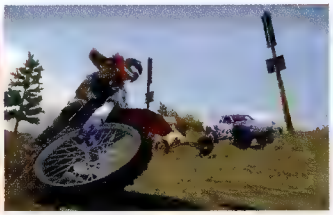
Back to back

Our favourite move is still the Back to Back shooting. Press ⊗ when near your buddy, and you'll enter a slow motion orgy of killing for 30 seconds, spinning and arching round each other like death-dealing dervishes. Cool.

ON THE DISC
See a censored version of *Manhunt 2* now

The last minute shots of big importance

The freshest pics, squeezed in as we go to press

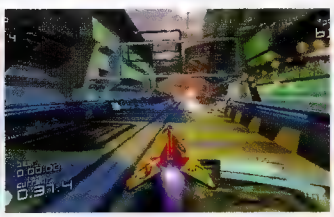
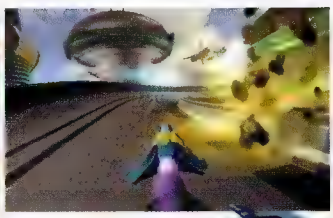


PS3 MX Vs ATV Get down and dirty with this off-road racer

Details **Pub** THQ | **Dev** Rainbow Studios | **Genre** Racing

Lowdown Before *MotorStorm* set new standards for particle physics, the *MX Vs ATV* series had the off-road scene tied up. The series' PS3 debut features beautiful open landscapes for to cruise at your leisure, or you can dip into the Career mode, Racing and Freestyle trick tournaments for more intense stunt-fuelled action. You can even skid about on your bike/quad/monster truck during the loading screens. Neat.

ETA October 2007

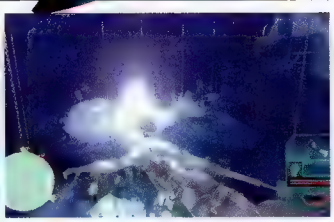



PSP WipEout Pulse And the racing beat goes on and on

Details **Pub** Sony | **Dev** Sony | **Genre** Racing

Lowdown After a two-year hiatus, everybody's favourite anti-gravity racer is back on PSP with a host of new tracks, ships and weapons, plus a host of series' firsts: Photo mode – where you can take snaps of your ride and save them, Mag-Strips – which strap your vehicle to the track so you can fly down vertical drops, and even a soundtrack customisable via your personal MP3s.

ETA September 2007

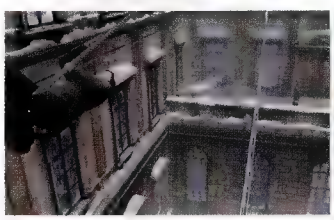


PSP Syphon Filter: Logan's Shadow Now with added double-crossing

Details **Pub** Sony | **Dev** Bend Studio | **Genre** Action

Lowdown Poor old Gabe Logan. Not only does he have to recover some devastating technology from a group of crazed terrorists, but his best friend Lian Xing is a suspected double agent. Thankfully, he's learned some new moves this time, so expect to take on enemies in underwater combat, and fire with some different weapons – including flash-bangs, sticky bombs and a grenade launcher. You can also play with a mate via Wi-Fi. Nice.

ETA October 2007

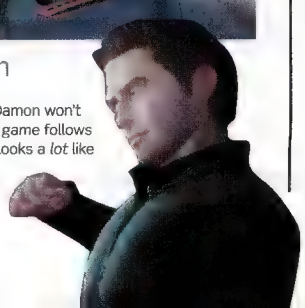


PS3 The Bourne Conspiracy Not to be confused with the film

Details **Pub** Sierra | **Dev** High Moon | **Genre** Action

Lowdown Surprisingly, this has nothing to do with the upcoming third film, Bourne Ultimatum. Worse, Matt Damon won't approve his likeness, so we're left with this potato-faced genero-Bourne (right) from the books. Instead, the game follows Bourne up until he decides to go AWOL from his government job. Combat's claustrophobic and brutal, but it looks a *lot* like the recently announced *Splinter Cell: Conviction* on Xbox 360, but less graphically accomplished.

ETA July 2007 (TBC)



The Optimist*

Don't worry. Be happy

"Manhunt 2 banned? Hooray!"

So the BBFC have banned *Manhunt 2* because of its "sustained casual sadism". Awesome! This is the proof we desperately needed that videogames don't deserve the same rating system as films because they're artistically inferior and of little or no worth to the edification of mankind. Yeaaah!

Blood and guts

So what if movies like Hostel, Oldboy and Straw Dogs feature prolonged scenes of gratuitous mutilation and jarring throwaway torture? They're *films*, which despite a few pesky decades or so of censorship scandal, are seen as important cultural artifacts with a near-inalienable right to free speech. Games, though, are a passing fad and will never appeal to adults, or spark intelligent debate.

Think of how many lives the BBFC have saved. How many jilted teenage boys ready to spring loose at any second they've spared from the corruptive influence of Rockstar's sadistic 'murder simulator'. They'll probably go and buy *Lucinda's Green Equestrian Challenge* and learn to love and cherish society.

Well, that, or watch Hostel II, violent R18 pornos, or a technicolour stream of disatisfaction-fuelling TV ads that have all been legitimised and are thus *in no way* corrupting. Fact.

EMAIL PSM3 @
Your thoughts on the *Manhunt 2* controversy?
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

*The views of the optimist do not necessarily co-incide with psm3's

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COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES...

ESTABLISHED 1981

Pub THQ | **Dev** Yuke's
Players 1-4 | **Genre** Beat-'em-up
FYI WWE comes to the next-gen

ON THE DISC
There'll be a tour of the Yuke's studio on the next disc

RAW

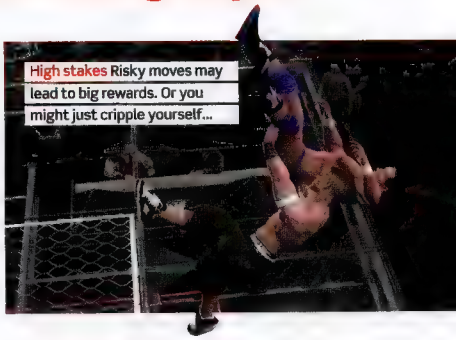
POWER

Eight different fighting styles. One exclusive PS3 hands-on. *Smackdown Vs Raw 2008* looks set to get wrestling games back to winning ways...

That the *Smackdown* games have become stale in recent years is undeniable. The last couple felt particularly bogged down with samey-feeling characters, an ill-conceived stamina system and, in last year's outing especially, bafflingly idiotic AI – which Lead Programmer Reiji Sato goes so far as to apologise to us for (see page 25).

The series couldn't even think about entering the next generation without a kick up the arse. The good news is that it just might have got one.

You might have read in PSM88 about the eight different fighting styles. These – Powerhouse, High Flyer, Technical, Brawler, Submission Expert,



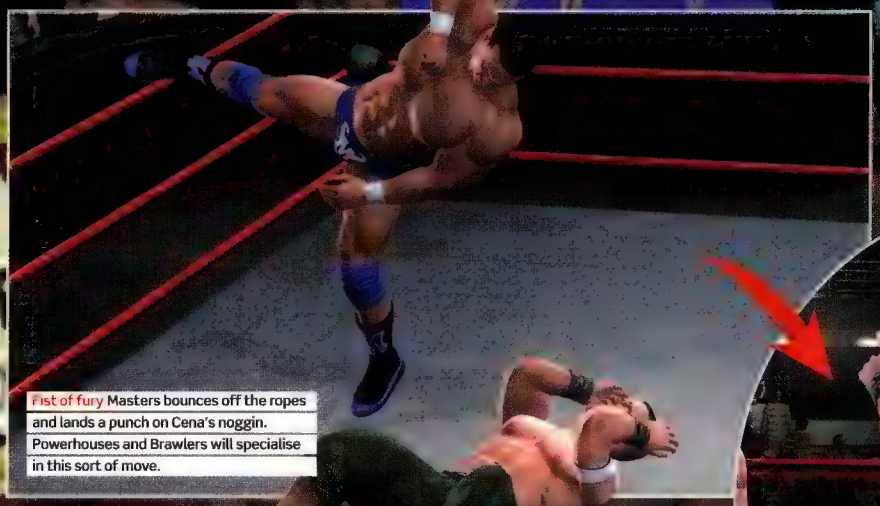
ahead. Triple H, for instance, can be either a Powerhouse or a Brawler, and you'll have to select just how you'd like to scrap.

So we choose Undertaker, and Powerhouse style. We opt to take on Chris Masters, also as Powerhouse (the majority of stars available to go hands-on with today are Powerhouses), because we hate Chris Masters and will enjoy pummelling him until his internal organs are irreparable.

"Undi looks even more imposing than he did before"

Showman, Dirty and Hardcore (which are the ECW mob's forte) – are all designed to make each grappler feel suitably different to others, forcing players to think tactically during each bout. Curiously, each wrestler will actually be an expert in two different styles, and you'll have to pick just one to specialize in for the match

The lights dim and Taker begins his slow wander down to ringside. It drips with visual quality. Presentation has always been *Smackdown*'s strong point, but Undi looks even more imposing and menacing than before, and the animation on his deliberate walk to the ring is nigh-on perfect. The crowd look impressive too, with around 7,000 different audience members. Then 'The Masterpiece' appears, does his ludicrous posing and preening – all



Fist of fury Masters bounces off the ropes and lands a punch on Cena's noggin. Powerhouses and Brawlers will specialise in this sort of move.

Corner bawl Only big guys will be able to trap people in the corner like this. Time for more punches.

looking terribly realistic, with lighting and shadows showing off his physique in just the same way WWE programming does – and saunters down to the ring himself. Time to see how *Smackdown 2008* handles.

Impact player

After a few opening punches, it's into a spot of grappling. As in last year's game, the grapple moves have been mapped to the right stick and it's the work of a moment to lift Masters up and slam him to the canvas. The impact of these moves is much improved – previous WWE games have occasionally felt a bit 'floaty' – and the camera cutaways add that vital sense of performance theatre to proceedings. It certainly seems to knock the stuffing out of Masters – that'll be the impact of playing as a Powerhouse, then.

The animation's been overhauled as well, with thousands of new frames of animation. Also, you're no longer confined to the D-pad's diagonals; instead you're free to run in any direction via the sticks. It makes matches look and feel a whole lot more like the 'real' thing.

Then we try out the new submission moves. Previous games have simply involved bashing buttons to wear your opponent down. Now you pull on the stick according to how much pressure you want to apply. Careful, though – pull back too hard, too much and you'll knacker yourself out and lose all your stamina. Masters squirms under the pressure of Taker's camel clutch – the facial animations are excellent – but breaks the hold. In multi-player mode, incidentally, the person trapped in the hold can break it by pushing the stick themselves. The less worn down they are, the easier it'll be. It's a good system, and one that feels more satisfying, and realistic, than simply jabbing at buttons for minutes at a time.

"Matches look and feel a lot more like the 'real' thing does"

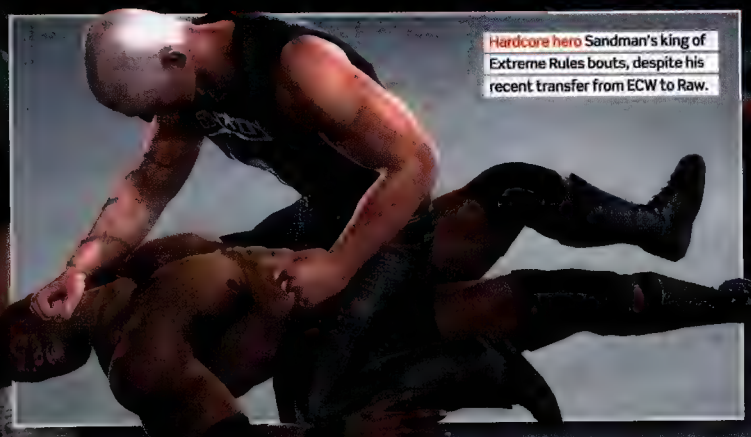
"The new submission system is a lot more satisfying than simply [illegible]"

Meaner Cena Big stars like Cena are very capable of withstanding punishment and striking back.

Class of punch The inevitable happens, and Masters gets his greasy face smacked in. Aces.

"ECW! ECW!"

Why ECW is the best thing to happen to *Smackdown* in years...



Hardcore hero Sandman's king of Extreme Rules bouts, despite his recent transfer from ECW to Raw.

Hardcore matches have been rechristened ECW Extreme Rules matches, and they're the most impressive thing so far. The advantage will go to whoever's quickest to slip outside and select a weapon from under the ring. You use a new 'weapon wheel' system for this, picking between instruments of death with the left stick. Ladders? Baseball bats? Singapore canes? Whatever. Then you can clamber back into the ring and attempt to beat your opponent to death. And this is where it's better to be an ECW/hardcore star – they're loads better at weapon-related sickness. Got a steel chair? Why not down your rival, stick his head between the folding bits, and then stamp down on it, almost breaking his neck? Normal guys can't do that. And if a hardcore star is made to bleed, it'll simply increase their momentum. They're mad for the red stuff. Get enough momentum going, in fact, and Sandman here smacks *himself* in the face with a chair, bleeding more heavily, thus garnering even more momentum. By the way – you can set those baseball bats on fire...

Oh, yes – we mentioned stamina just then, the one thing, even above the terrible AI of *Smackdown 2007*, that's verged on ruining the last couple of games for us. Good news? The stamina gauge seems to have vanished. And there wasn't any requirement to scuttle away from your opponent every so often and hold down SELECT or ◎ to replenish your strength. You do get tired, though, so it's important to get your opponent in rest holds every so often and not simply churn out high-impact move after high-impact move – although Powerhouse wrestlers are able to do this for longer than others. However, right now, sometimes no matter how frantically you jab at the pad following the on-screen tip to 'press any button repeatedly' to stand up after a period of prolonged assault, you stay prone. Bah.

Anyway, the bout turns into a back-and-forth match, both men exchanging power moves (there are 1,200 to 1,500 moves in the game apparently) and punches – reversible via R1 and ▢ like last year, which feels a touch more effective than before – until we trigger Rampage Mode. Unique to the Powerhouses, build up enough momentum and you can embark on a 20-second rampage of irreversible power moves. While your opponent can get blows in, anything you try – suplexes, slams, power bombs – will automatically succeed, leaving your rival near-enough out for the count. And so it proves here. One pinfall later, and the crowd rise to salute the Undertaker. Next, we go for a contrast: the high-flying Rey Mysterio against the brawler (superstars who are experts with their fists) John Cena. And this is where it all goes a bit tits-up.

"*Smackdown 2008* could be something of an event"

Size *is* important

Mysterio is *useless* at basic attacks. OK, he's smaller than many wrestlers, and that you're supposed to use his aerial moves (and these are impressive and effective) to take people down instead of fists-and-feet scrapping, but... shouldn't he be able to kick Cena in the stomach without hobbling away clutching his foot? It's a boot in the guts, after all. Cena, meanwhile, seems to have improbable powers of recovery – despite being massacred in a two-player bout against Sandman, he wouldn't be pinned, despite being down for nigh on ten minutes.

While that fits in with WWE's portrayal of Cena as some sort of near-unconquerable hero, it frustrates when translated to a videogame. Tuning may be in order.

Other matches follow. Randy Orton's showman style works well – we use his taunts to renew our momentum, and nick finishers from opponents. Lashley is dominant. Every move – from basic punches to elbow drops off the top rope – is rammed with impact, and Sandman... well, see the previous page for more on Sandman and Hardcore matches. We think these are hugely important, lending a freshness that the series has been lacking. But even the most bog-standard match feels more involving than before. We're definitely more optimistic about *Smackdown 2008* than we were about *Smackdown 2007*. We'll keep you posted.

PSM3 Reckons

Moves are more weighty than before, it looks gorgeous and the fighting styles we've experimented with feel slick. If it comes with an involving Season mode, even more match types, and – crucially – online play, *Smackdown 2008* could be something of an event.

Cage rage Randy Orton chucks Masters off the top of a cage. Expect all the usual types of bouts, and hopefully some new ones. We're praying for Hair vs Hair.

Smackdown Vs Raw 2008

"Shouldn't Mysterio be able to kick Cena without hobbling away holding his foot?"

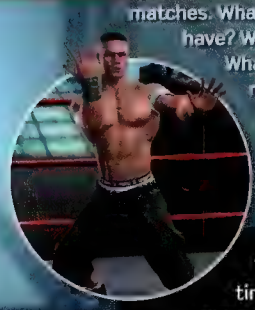
Q&A

Reiji Sato,
Lead Programmer

Mr Smackdown talks about AI and his favourite grapplers...

What feedback did you get from the fans after the last *Smackdown* game?

Probably the number one thing we got back from fans, and that really made us feel as if we had something to apologise for, was the AI. That was something we heard a lot about. And so one thing we spent a lot of time thinking about is tag team matches. What kind of AI should an AI teammate have? What kind of AI should an opponent take? What makes it more fun? What makes it more authentic? What makes it closer to actual WWE? That's something we've been working on a lot.



Given the eight different fighting styles, is it difficult to come up with eight different types of AI?

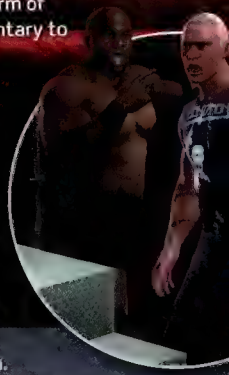
That something that's taken a lot of time and work and it will evolve as we move forward and is being worked on. At the moment, the AI doesn't know what to do with all these new elements. 'What do I do? How do I do all this stuff? How should I move?'

In previous games, there have only been six wrestlers max on-screen at a time in the Royal Rumble. Will PS3's power allow there to be more?

Speaking for myself, that's a wonderful idea and something I would like to do. I wish you would tell that to the modellers. All the models take up the polygon count, and they want to do more realistic models, with more polygons for each one.

How will the commentary change for PS3?

Every year we add a lot more, especially this year when we have a new brand in the form of ECW. We do have a lot more commentary to add this time around.



Who are your favourite wrestlers?

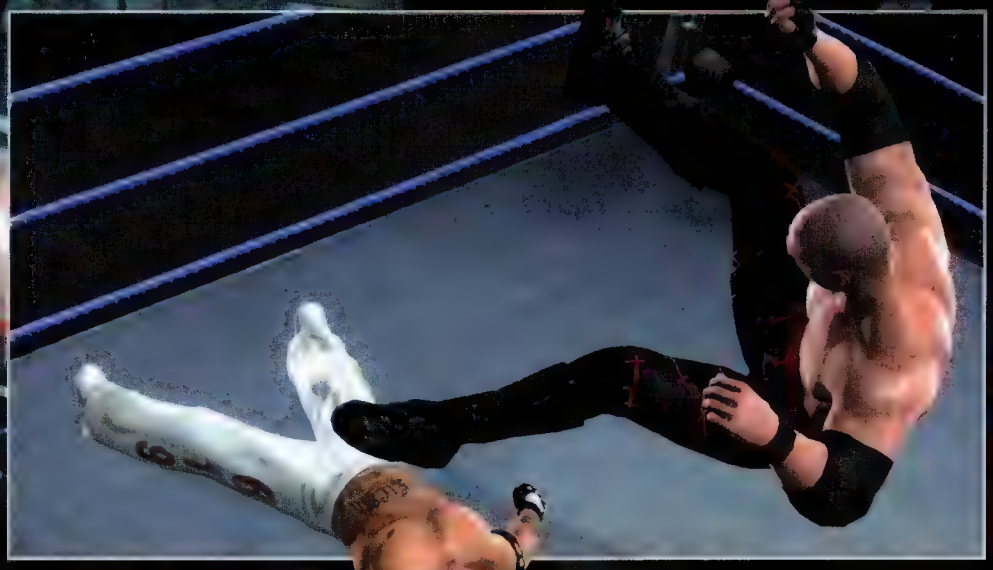
First off, Chris Benoit. In 2004 Royal Rumble, Benoit was in against Kurt Angle. It was such a great match that when Benoit lost, the fans gave him a standing ovation and Benoit in response to that had tears in his eyes. There was so much emotion in the arena. I was feeling the same way, and so touched I was nearly breaking down.

And my other favourite would be Stone Cold Steve Austin. The first time I saw Wrestlemania was Wrestlemania 21. Stone Cold was obviously in the games before that, but it felt like we'd been working together all that time. Finally we were meeting after all we'd been through.

Time to play the Game... Here's Triple H. He'll doubtless be one of the most handy characters again. Look how impressive the new wrestler models are.

Anatomy of a ladder match

Extreme Rules + ladders = mayhem...



1 Rey of shite

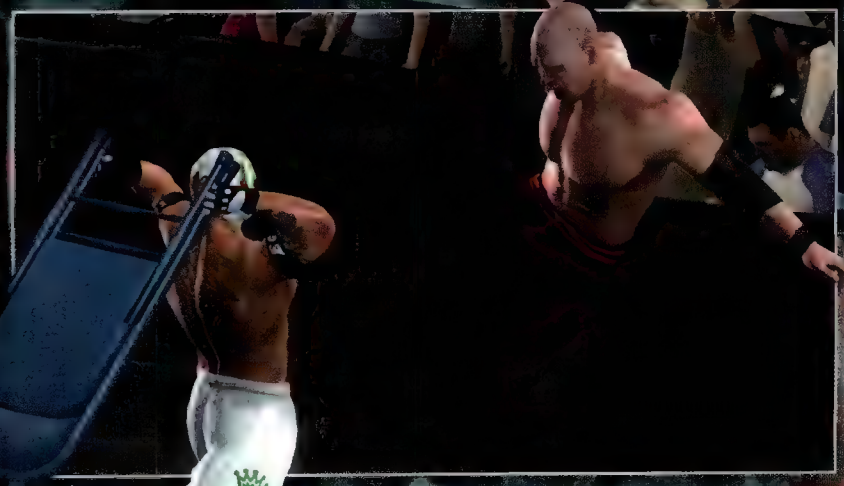
As you might have read already, Rey Mysterio is absolutely rubbish offensively in this early version of *Smackdown Vs Raw 2008*. Nippy? Yes. Nimble? Yes. Tough? Nah. Kane, however, is a giant beast of a man. As such, it's not difficult for him to flatten his masked enemy with a quick slam, then bounce off the ropes and perform a leg-drop with a jab of ⊗. This is the sort of move that looks a little more devastating than it really is, but the force of Kane bouncing off the ropes and then landing on top of Mysterio's masked face is impressive nonetheless. Naturally, impact moves like this are accompanied by one of Smackdown's camera cutaways, in which the most dramatic angle of each move is displayed in all its glory.

2 Chair necessities

Rey's speed of movement is enough to get the hell out of the ring quick-smart, though. Kane follows him out, and both delve beneath the ring apron for weapons. Rey finds himself with that WWE staple, the steel chair. Kane grabs a plank of wood covered in barbed wire. As neither of these two are Hardcore grapplers, neither are weapons specialists. However, both are fearsome tools, no matter whose hands they're in. Both lash out... who's going to get the advantage?

3 The bigger they are...

It's Mysterio, amazingly. He knocks the wire-wrapped wood clean out of Kane's hands, but that's not enough to send 'the Big Red Machine' down. The more powerful the wrestler, the harder the blow, obviously - but then, smaller guys like Mysterio tend to be quicker, and may be able to get their shots in first. Rey goes for another chair attack, while Kane hopes to boot him in the face first and regain the initiative. If Mysterio can get this bang on, the momentum will be entirely with him...

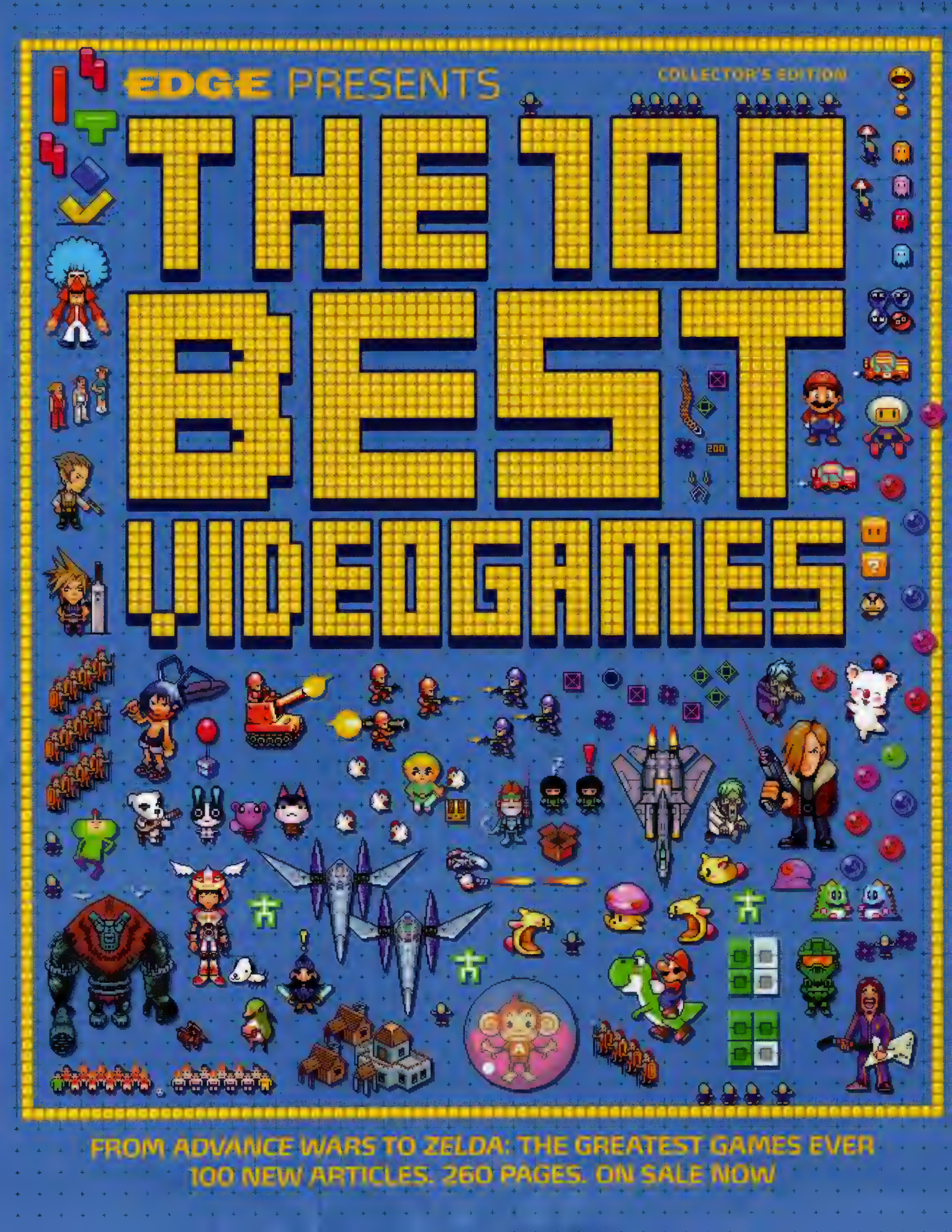


4 ...the harder they fall

Both combatants appear to have forgotten they're in a ladder match. Still, while Kane's down, Mysterio scampers up the steps and elbow-drops his bigger opponent with ⊗. High flyers like Rey have context-sensitive moves so that simply jabbing a solitary button near the ropes, stairs, etc, pulls off ludicrous high-risk manoeuvres easily. This is essential to the high-flying stars' hopes of victory.

5 Stairway to heaven

Mysterio leaves his foe grounded on the outside, pulls a ladder out from beneath the ring and sets it up inside. A quick scamper up the rungs and he's desperately trying to untie the title belt that will be his reward. Kane's last-gasp lunge for the ladder doesn't look like it's going to be enough to stop Rey claiming his title... the ladder gets knocked down, but Mysterio stays dangling from the ceiling. Eventually, after a few jabs of the buttons, the belt comes loose. Rey Mysterio is the new WWE champion. Well done, Rey.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FOUND A GOLDEN TITLE BELT?

Enter our draw for a chance to win a PS3 and trip to Wrestlemania in USA*

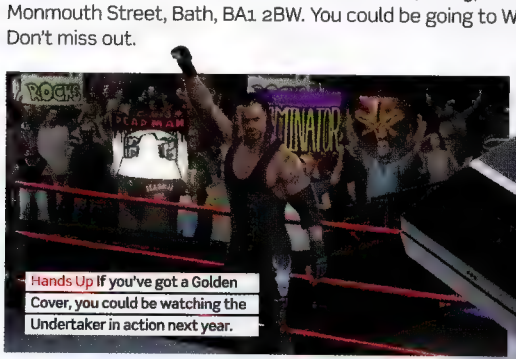
Found a WWE Championship belt on this month's cover? If so, and you're over 16, you're eligible to enter our amazing prize draw. On top of eight regular collectible wrestler covers, we've printed a mere ten 'Title Belt' golden covers, giving the holders a chance to win a PS3, plus a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Wrestlemania 24 in Florida next March, plus runners-up prizes.

Simply tear off your cover and send to us, with your name, postal address, email address, phone number, proof of age and the name and address of the shop you bought it from. We'll stick the entries in a prize draw, and print the winner(s) in PSM3#92, out August 30.

First prize: Two tickets to Wrestlemania 24 in March next year, including three nights accommodation, £500 spending money, return flights, a PS3 and a copy of *WWE Smackdown Vs Raw 2008* (See below for full details).

Runners up prize (x4): Copies of *WWE Smackdown Vs Raw 2008* on PS3, a signed copy of Mick Foley's Hardcore Diaries and a set of WWE posters each (see gbposters.com/related/WWE).

Send entries to "I Found The WWE Title Belt!", PSM3, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. You could be going to Wrestlemania. Don't miss out.



Hands Up If you've got a Golden Cover, you could be watching the Undertaker in action next year.

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(ii) Runners up prizes x 4 – WWE Smackdown Vs Raw 2008 on PS3, The Hardcore Diaries by Mick Foley (signed) and a set of 4 posters (Cena, The Undertaker, Rey Mysterio, Triple H). (the "Runner up Prize")
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PS3

Pub Konami | **Dev** KCET
Players 1-8 | **Genre** Sports
FYI *PES* makes its true next-gen debut

ON THE DISC
PES 2008 will be on the disc next time
PS3/Comms/Shop

QUOTE

Developer insight

"With the new Teamvision AI system, we truly believe that we have elevated the game to a new level. The movement of players off the ball, coupled with the total control given to the player, creates the closest simulation of real football to date."

Shingo 'Seabass' Takatsuka
Producer

Set pieces

You can set how many players stand in the wall, allowing you to mark more tightly around a free kick – i.e. prevent free kick takers 'going gay' (in the US slang sense) and playing a cheap short free kick for a tap-in. The enhanced set piece system lets you exploit good strikers of the ball and those with aerial prowess. Sixaxis support would be neat – like keeper penalty dives, throw-ins and free kick aftertouch – but it's all just speculation for now.

Pro Evolution Soccer 2008

...in the pub? Big changes ahead.

Dave Harrison

Teamvision may sound like a meaningless *FIFA* term, but it's actually a new 'adaptive' AI system at the heart of *PES*'s PS3 debut. The game 'learns' how to counter your playing style, forcing you to exploit the pitch for gaps – making radar use vital. For example, you can't just keep running down the flanks and crossing for 'cheap' goals. Producer Seabass' believes that *PES* shouldn't be played like a 'videogame' which can be broken by scientific patterns of play, but like real football where tactical decisions are made on the fly. Put simply, this'll probably mean more defenders in your attacking areas, but could also include counter-tactics such as using the space on the break vacated by adventurous full backs. How effective the opposition will be at countering depends on their ability, so sides with high 'Teamwork' stats adapt quickest. Then there's sides that will try to adapt but lack the quality to stop the opposition executing their gameplan.

Conversely, Teamvision may *help* by adapting off-the-ball runs from

What's going on?

The most tantalising new image is this chap – that's Espimas from the Master League, *PES* fans – being interviewed by 'Web News' and 'Web TV' mics. Making two plus two equal five, we're speculating it's from an online Master League, or a new 'post-match' interview function to create atmosphere, highlighting key player performances like the 'hidden' match reports on the Individual Details screen in *Pro Evo 6*.

Say it right

Perhaps you can pick post-match statements to boost morale? Hmm.

Web widens

The mics' are all from web-TV-style sources. An online Master League hint? We'll see.

Fan woe

Perhaps you'll get pre, post and maybe in-game fan reactions to build atmosphere. *Please.*

Pub TV

A shot from the intro movie? Maybe, but all these screens look like in-game graphics. Pub highlight reels with fan reaction would be a great new feature.

JUST THE FACTS?

What we know

- **New Teamvision AI** will make the opposition harder to breakdown as they adapt to the tactics you use the most.
- **Support players** will have better AI to support the player in possession.
- **New dribble** animations will enable the ball to be manipulated in tight space when under pressure.
- **Improved set** piece system with more attacking options and control of the defensive wall.
- **Greater player** detail with full facial animations.

What we need to know

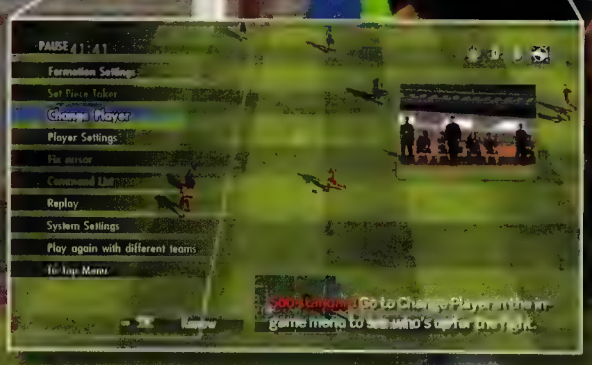
- **Just how** Master League will be improved?
- **What international** team and club licenses have been signed up?
- **How the** Sixaxis will be used – for set pieces? Throw ins? Penalty saves?
- **What online** features will be included? Will cross-platform play be possible?
- **What new** tricks will be added to the action?

supporting players to suit your style of play. There's an element of this in the Xbox 360 game, but it's scuppered by erratic shooting – hopefully fixed here. Bottom line – expect more intelligent runs from the top players like Rooney.

PES's new animations should benefit control – expect useful new tricks like Ronaldo's back-heel change of direction or Anderson's behind the leg flick-flak, as well as more player-specific movements like Aaron Lennon's scampering dribbles.

Visually, it's a big step up, even if players look a little injection-moulded in these still screens – expect the game to come to life in motion. Konami are keeping *loads* to their chest – player interviews, online play, Master League, licensing, new modes, in-game *pubs* (see screens) – but the informed speculation begins here. More next month.

Facebook Players' facial animations are more expressive, improving atmosphere.



Sub-Lenglish Go to Change Player in the in-game menu to see who's up for the fight.

Bench warfare

Not only can you see the bench, including a tiny animated manager, from certain angles on the pitch, but in an inset box when you go to the substitutions menu – perhaps to show players' reaction to being brought off and replaced. If so, it suggests some elements of *PES Management* have been introduced to the Master League option.

tugs | feints | **shoves** | shimmies | **nudges**

Portuguese gamesmanship is included

Shirt tugging

Look closely. Cheeky, eh? We doubt there's a dedicated 'grab shirt' button – this screen is most likely an incidental animation – but this could be triggered by a player's high 'aggression' stat, or perhaps it's a cheeky new way to deliberately foul/press players by holding ⊗, rather than the crude, ref-angering, two-footed lunge (◎)

PSM3 Reckons

The screens are promising enough, but it's what we're *not* seeing that's got us excited – we're hoping for big Master League news to follow.

PS3

Pub Activision | **Dev** Infinity Ward
Players 1-32 | **Genre** First-person shooter
FYI The series ditches WW2 for future war.

ON THE DISC
See *Call Of Duty 4* on this month's disc

Show and tell It's all seen in first-person, even cut-scenes.

Call Of Duty 4: Modern Warfare

World War 2? Old hat. It's all about present day war... Andy Kelly

Bad Russians. They're always trying to take over the world. Or at least, that's what Tom Clancy games would have you believe. And now *Call Of Duty* is reinforcing the stereotype with Zakiyev, their new game's villain. Yep, the World War 2 stuff is gone – for the best, because we were getting mighty sick of men in green hats – and here we are in the present day.

So, Zakiyev. He wants to lure the USA into conflict, then exploit their weakness by attacking them when they least expect it. It's pretty standard war game fare, but Infinity Ward president Grant Collier insists that character and plot will be hugely important in this new *CoD*.

Full of character

But of course, all that matters is the shooting and the set-pieces. *Duty*, after all, has never been famed for its lovable characters. We can't actually remember a single bloke from any of the games, although we are informed that a number of 'favourites' will make a return – presumably through flashbacks, unless they've thrown realism out the window and included some form of time travel. Or ancestors.

The game plays exactly the way you'd expect. Solid, robust and linear. What we've played suggests *Modern Warfare* to be a very, very good first-person shooter and a natural culmination of the last eight thousand (give or take) *Call Of Duty* games. Infinity Ward know shooting, and this looks to be their best yet.

We saw only a handful of levels, but they were more exciting than a day out with Batman. First there was the tanker level we've lovingly recreated above, then there was an epic helicopter ride across a Middle Eastern village, clearly inspired by jarring war flick Black Hawk Down. Look around with the analogue stick and you can see dozens of brilliantly rendered choppers flying alongside you with an astronomically smooth frame-rate, then you see hundreds

THEN & NOW

How big a leap is the sequel?

Then... Call Of Duty PS2 2003
The first of *Medal Of Honor*'s many rivals. Opinion was polarised, but *CoD*'s excellent multi-player won World War 2 fans over.

Now... Call Of Duty 4 PS3 2007
While *MoH* retains its WW2 setting, *CoD* has taken its winning formula to the near future. Good move? Time will tell...

Stop, drop and roll

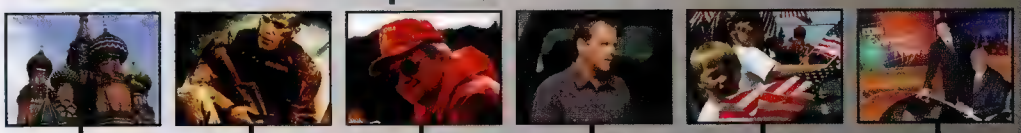
The game's cinematic opening is set aboard a rain-lashed tanker in the middle of the sea. You fly in via helicopter and zip down to the deck, braving the elements to reclaim the bridge from a terrorist hijacker.

Jolly smoke ... looks stunning. Even Sarge's ... glows realistically.

Face your fears These nasty fellas are waiting for you below...

INFLUENCES

The elements that make up *CoD4*...



Dust bowl Enemies are hard to spot among dust kicked up by rifle fire. Use your heat vision.

Clever read The muted colours make the game feel natural and realistic, like on TV news.

of men rappel down from them in real-time (you included), before switching seamlessly to a traditional FPS view. This is where the level begins, and by then you'll be well and truly immersed. It's really rather incredible.

The next mission we saw took place at night and, if we're honest, it was the least impressive. It involved liberal use of night vision goggles – which, by the way, make the exact same sound as Sam Fisher's when you activate them – and consisted of hopping between bombed-out buildings during missile strikes. It felt a bit like *Rainbow Six* and we'd seen it all before.

Soldiers of fortune

In true *Call Of Duty* style, the game lets you play as both US and British troops – so some levels see you in the boots of SAS soldiers, which makes a nice change from the yee-hawin', gun-ho Yanks. The version we saw had yet to have the proper voices added, however, and our ears were soiled by the game's US design team putting on corny English accents. Awful.

In terms of advancement from the last game, Infinity Ward have been focusing their attention on the AI. They've developed a system that not only makes your buddies (and your enemies) behave more naturally, but that seamlessly links animations to make their movement appear just as realistic. And it appears to have worked.

We need to see more of *Call Of Duty 4* before we decide if we're going to love it or not. We can't decide whether it's a genuinely new experience, or *Call Of Duty* with more grey and futuristic weapons. We won't have a clear idea until we play through the game properly and get to experience that narrative that we're promised will be so important. It could easily be just another *Call Of Duty* with a visual overhaul, but we think it has a lot more to offer. We were impressed more by our hands-on with *MoH: Airborne*, though...

PSM3 Reckons

A bold new direction? Not sure. We need to see further innovations if this is to be more than just a glorified mission pack.

ETA NOV 2007

Pub SCEE | **Dev** Incognito
Players 1-32 | **Genre** Online shooter
FYI Hands-on with recent public beta test

ON THE DISC

Welcome to the jungle Warhawk has a wide variety of environments, from Star Wars-style outposts to steamy jungles.

Warhawk

Mike Jennings

Sony's shooter thrills in live 30-player online test

QUOTE
Developer insight

"There's aiming assist on the 4x4, we've reduced the power and range of the pistol, plus tightened the rifle's accuracy. We've put a horn on the 4x4, and you won't lose stats if the game quits out unexpectedly."

Dylan Jobe, Incognito
Explains how the Beta test will influence the final game

Back in 2005, *Warhawk* began life a tech demo designed to showcase the Sixaxis tilt function and PS3's ability to render hundreds of on-screen aircraft. Two years later, it's an almost unrecognizable online *Battlefield: Modern Combat* tribute with extensive on-foot warfare, available as an online-only game from the PS Store. *Warhawk's* development history might be baffling, but the concept couldn't be easier to grasp – a sign-on, blast-off massively multi-player online war game, as two sides go head-to-head. And judging from our experiences on the recent public Beta test, it could be the multi-player sleeper hit of PS3's troubled infancy.

The game initially feels geared towards air combat – though it's a different experience to that promised at E3 in 2005, where early videos highlighted scores of twitchy, maneuverable planes screaming through the air, assaulting enormous behemoths, in scenes akin to Independence Day. Judging by the Beta version, the aerial combat is less epic, but a vast expansion in terms of depth.

For example, while the 'Warhawk' plane – a futuristic Harrier jet - remains crucial to the game's mechanics, they're a lot more agile, with players flipping between 'hover' (ideal for targeting ground-based foes) and 'jet' (ideal for evasion and covering ground fast) mode with a tap of △. Sixaxis control is responsive, if twitchy – perhaps preferable to analogue control for rapid evasive rolls, but not precise targeting. Aerial battles are a bit stop/start despite the sheer volume of combatants, and it's hard to track exactly who you're after.

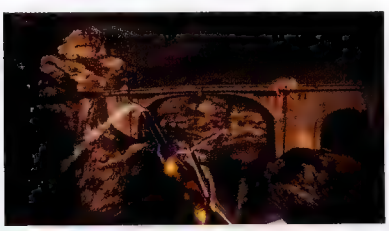
Fly on the wall Flight controls are assigned to both sticks and are tricky to master at first.

Jeep of faith

On the ground, nippy 4x4s and ponderous, powerful tanks are liberally distributed. The jeeps can accommodate three players: a driver, passenger, and a vulnerable-looking gunner who, for the sake of exposing himself to a riddling of bullets, is able to control a gatling gun. And, of course, the vehicle's co-operative nature can only be fully appreciated online. Tanks are similar; only room for two, but when one's operating the central cannon and the other is protruding from the turret wielding a hefty rocket launcher, it's a daunting sight.

Warhawk comes alive on the larger maps, like Eucadia and Island Outpost, when it can properly flex it's long-distance muscles. Play shifts rapidly from sneaking around a ruined town, ducking behind smouldering tyres and watching for anyone using the game's semi-automatic, on-foot targeting system – intelligently utilised to combat the pad's sluggishness compared to keyboard and mouse – to tossing the Warhawk between islands, evading missiles and searching for crucial flags, cruising over water that, suspiciously, resembles aluminium foil. Graphics are surprisingly vibrant and polished, like a hi-res *Freedom Fighters*; there isn't a hint of slowdown, even on cramped, busy worlds, but the really impressive aspect is the rock-solid draw-distance as you take to the skies tackling up to 30 enemy fighters. We can only hope that a larger map selection will be playable than the handful available now.

Much has been made of the Sixaxis control system, which was first unveiled at E3 last year amid a lot of confusion – Sony claim that developer Incognito had access to the tilting technology for longer than the studio itself will admit to – and its integration into *Warhawk* appears to be an intriguing mix of innovative control and inadequate gimmick – aerial battles become stunt displays with few attacks connecting, while the aerial targeting system barely extending beyond left-thumb floundering. Purists can fly using traditional analogue control, pressing triangle to enter flight mode and, using the right stick, unleashing rolls, loops and vomit-inducing acrobatics to avoid attack. The rest of the buttons correspond well, with acceleration, weaponry and movement more-or-less where you'd expect, aiding our smooth integration into the game – experienced players laughing at our initial incompetence aside, it didn't take long to get to grips with *Warhawk's* absorbing combat.



Bridge the gap Precise flying is needed to avoid the many hazards that litter *Warhawk's* environments. Watch out.

Incognito's latest will thrive or dive on the strength of its community. The game *needs* busy servers – double-figures, minimum – to stop the game deteriorating into a tedious rush for the finite, but quite generous number, of Warhawks, leaving a multitude of vehicles rotting on the ground. Equally, on-foot combat is currently only used as part of the madcap struggle to

bag a plane. Stragglers dart around, trying to leap into any vehicle so they're not left exposed. Others flop around like fish on a sun-baked riverbed, trying to avoid being ground up in the caterpillar tracks of an oncoming tank.

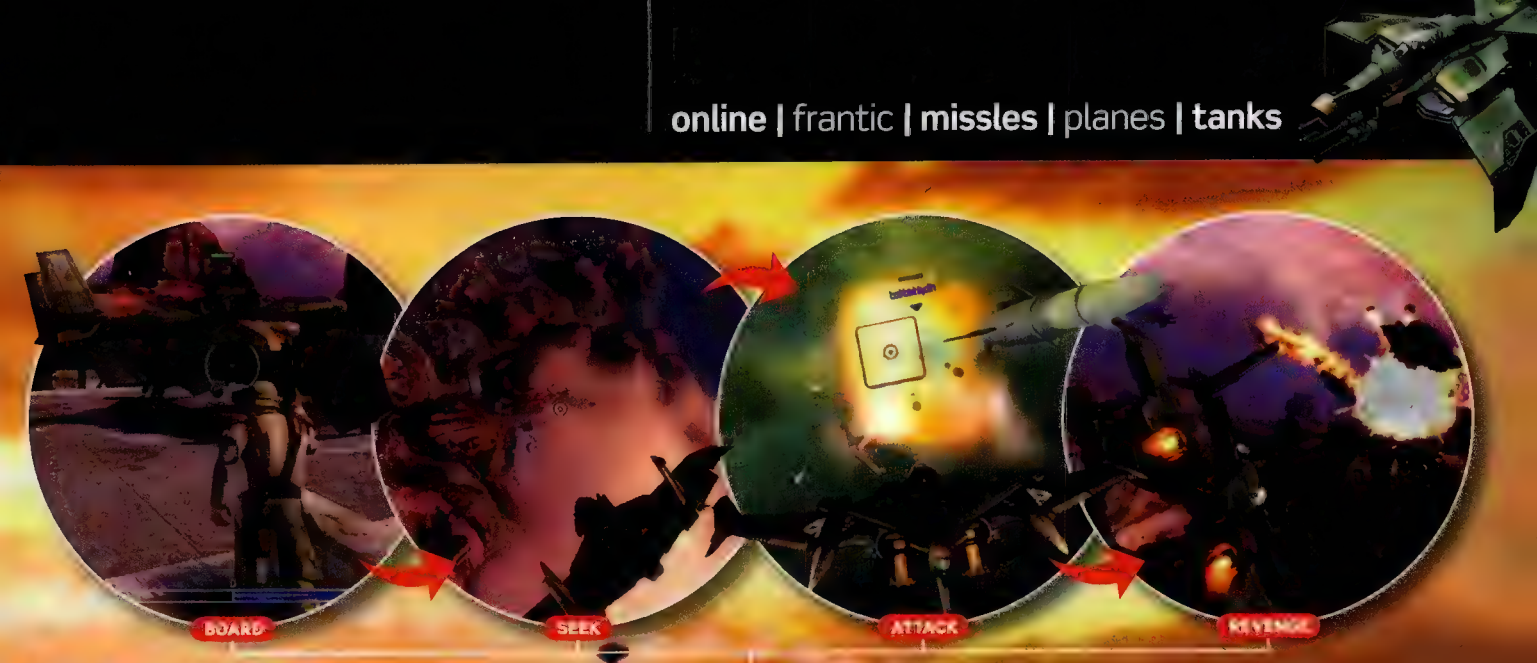
Tweak out

With some tweaking – making ground vehicles more effective, and reducing the number of planes, perhaps – this could easily be improved. It's not all *Warhawk's* fault, of course: a 32-man server, fully occupied, provides an exhilarating mix of dog-fighting, armoured vehicles slugging it out and squads of commandos in volatile firefights and the genuine feeling that you're in the middle of an extremely pretty – and violent – warzone. At its height, it recreates the multi-faceted, rack-up-kill thrills of PC games like *Operation Flashpoint* or *Tribes* – it's easy to ignore the real people behind the avatars and become obsessed with your statistics – but with the intensity and speed of something like *TimeSplitters* or *Unreal Tournament*.

Single-player campaign? Not just yet, no. As we type, *Warhawk* is slated for a double assault on the multi-player arena – a basic edition will be made available for download, with a Blu-ray collectors edition featuring DVD-style extras and a Bluetooth headset for real time troop communication. Either way, it's shaping up to be PlayStation 3's ultimate casual online shooter – more accessible, varied and frantic than *Resistance Fall of Man*, but in need of weaponry/vehicle balancing to truly get off the ground.

Tanks a lot

The only way to travel when you're on the ground. The humble tank is perfect for taking out oponents while they're trying to find a plane. It's hugely cumbersome, though, which makes it an easy traget for passing aircraft. Shooting planes from the sky is possible, but remember to shoot where they're *going to be* rather than where they are.



How dogfights work

Dogfights are easily the most exhilarating part of *Warhawk*. There's nothing quite like seeing two aircraft duke it out in a violent aerial ballet. Master the game's variety of evasive rolls and you'll master the harsh skies of the game in no time. Getting into the plane is the hardest part, though, and dodging gunfire to get into the cockpit takes real skill.

Ground control to Major Tom

The area that needs most work is definitely the on-foot sections. Character animation is clunky and, although the presence of an auto-aim helps while fighting other soldiers, you still feel horribly vulnerable with so many planes and tanks scouring the environment. Let's hope weapons are more powerful in the final game.

PSM3 Reckons

As long as the numerous transport options are properly balanced, online conflict is shaping up to be volatile, varied and hugely popular.

ETA OCT 2007

Pub EA | **Dev** EA Canada
Players 1-8 | **Genre** Sports
FYI Ronaldinho returns as the cover star

ON THE DISC
See more of FIFA 08 on the disc soon

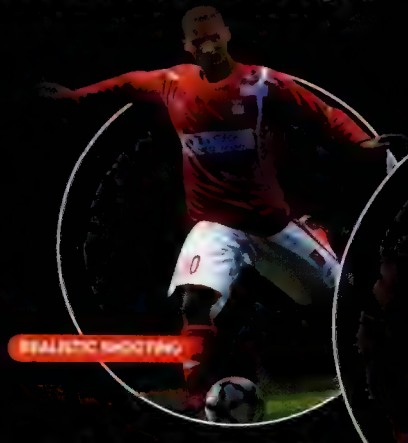
FIFA '08

Wildly ambitious, but the jury's out

Mike Jennings

1 Never see the same dribble animation twice

FIFA's animation system is 'organic', with foot-to-ball contact calculated on-the-fly, depending on your speed, position and player skill – use prods and pokes of the stick to create unique dribble styles or string together signature tricks from the likes of Ronaldo, Ronaldinho or Rooney.

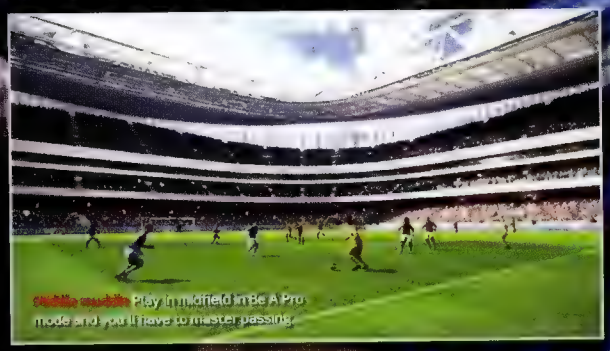


2 Improved ball physics

You'll no longer be able to leather the ball goalwards with the tap of a button as wind resistance, opposing pressure and even air pressure will determine where the ball goes. Each touch of the pad will prompt different ball-to-foot interactions, subject to an almost infinite number of variables – for example, when passing, you'll have to consider wind direction, the size and weight of the ball and the mental state of the player. Hmmm. Sounds a bit complex to us...

3 Actually, there *is* an 'I' in team

EA claim their 'Be a Pro' mode will let you experience the thrills – and misery – of a real player. You'll take control of one player for the entire match, for example, 'defender' Titus Bramble, and red rings will appear at the feet of people you should be marking – something Titus must wish happened in real life. Play as an attacker and you get to make off-the-ball runs and hog the glory. Gimmick? We'll see, but *PES* has had a 'Fixed' player mode for years.



Play in midfield in Be A Pro mode and you'll have to master passing.

Expect every squad to be up-to-date including the tyre-waisted Ronaldo at AC Milan

4 Even more licenses

FIFA '08 features over 15,000 licensed player including Drogba and Kaka. There will also be 30 leagues including 620 official teams from AC Milan to Accrington Stanley. Plus, there's the promise of a more in-depth online league as EA believes that it plays 'an integral part' in shaping the future of football games. Details are scarce now, but we'll have more next month.

Pace race Licensing means accurate player data. Expect Aaron Lennon to be super-fast.

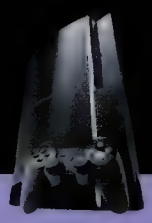
5 Artificial Intelligence?

Players are equipped with 'threat maps', letting them analyse the space around them to make intelligent, realistic footballing decisions in real-time. Smart.

PSM3 Reckons

EA claim you'll be able to play for 200 hours without seeing the same thing twice. Bold, and odd, as that sounds, we're quietly hopeful...

ETA SEP 2007



Pub Midway | **Dev** Midway Austin
Players 1-32 | **Genre** FPS
FYI Part action, part tactical shooter

ON THE DISC
See Area 51 on the Disc

Blacksite: Area 51

Promising hands-on verdict based on three new levels

Dave Meikleham

The original *Area 51* wasn't as satisfying as we'd hoped. Keen to distance themselves from that debacle, Midway are trying to create an altogether more exciting *Area 51*, with less of the humanoid-looking aliens, more squad involvement and greater thrills. Instead of sneaking through government bases, like the first game, *Blacksite* aims to capture the essence of small town USA. Expect to be killing extraterrestrial scum everywhere, from petrol stations to humble back gardens and all points in-between. Just mind the garden gnomes.

Black in the act

We're playing three new levels with grittier, more believable settings: from ducking for cover on the streets of Iraq – complete with Saddam propaganda posters – or tearing aliens apart in a mundane trailer park in rural Nevada. Although several members of Midway Austin previously worked on the Deus Ex series, it's clear that *Blacksite* is aiming more for action than exploration. In that sense it's shaping up to be like Half-Life 2, and has a similar cinematic, snappy feel to that classic of the genre.

Other highlights from the demo include a rocket launcher that can fire around corners – *Resistance* style – and a glimpse at the game's *Stranglehold*-esque destructible scenery; kneecapping a statue, which then crumbles apart from head to toe is a particularly good example. The best bit, though, is the small matter of a helicopter fight against the alien chap oozing all over these pages. The game's frame-rate is currently a bit wonky, mind, but we've been told that this will be sorted before release.

Face off We don't know about you, but our money is on the bloke with the big pincers.

Good leadership + motivated troops

Keep your spirits up

Blacksite puts you at the helm of a small team of special forces. Wisely, Midway have chosen to keep squad controls simple – all orders can be deployed through the ⊗ button. It's more sophisticated than at first glance, though, with your squad's performance tied into an ambitious AI morale system. Fight poorly or fail to dish out orders and your men will lose confidence in you, holding back in firefights. But take it to the alien hordes like one John Rambo, and they'll respond in kind.

Alien nation

The game pits you against all sorts of alien life, and you'll have to use different tactics against each species. AI is adaptive – aliens flee cover if what they're hiding behind takes too much damage – and their movement is also 'interesting'. The guy in the middle here runs like a feral ostrich. It's not all aliens, though – you get to fight soldiers in Iraq.

Worm food

Easily the standout moment from the demo is the battle with this giant worm creature. You can't fail to be impressed by the scale as you dart around the gaping ravine in your helicopter, desperately trying to dodge his massive tentacles. Judging by this, *Blacksite*'s bosses could well rival *DMC4*'s as the most epic encounters on PS3.

A Bridge too far Pump enough hot lead into wormy and he'll fall, taking half the bridge with him.

PSM3 Reckons

If *Blacksite* can couple its bold morale system with truly destructible scenery, this could be PS3's first essential shooter.

Your words, your pictures, your videos...

Your Space

Start

44 Letters
Choice cuts from the PSM3 mail sack.

45 Text PSM3
Your texts exposed to the world.

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Ex-Sony guru answers your queries.

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Vote – you'll see democracy in action.

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Our eight favourite readers this month.

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Think we talk rubbish? You try it.

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Disagree with our scores? Say so.

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The best gamer videos out there.

PSM3 Wants You!

Post PSM3, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. Star letter wins the writer a game

Email PSM3@futurenet.co.uk

Text 87103 and start your message PSM3

MySpace & the PSM3 blog Go to myspace.com/psm3 or check out psm3mag.com

Online Play the team at online games and win big

Letters To PSM3

Your letters and emails, sifted and printed

Paying the price for new technology

LETTER

At the moment, Nintendo's Wii is dominating. It fits the needs of the general consumer perfectly: it's cheap and simple. Don't forget the importance of having a game included with it either.

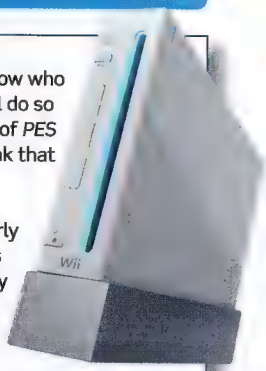
PS3 is too expensive. It's out of reach of consumers. It's perceived as an expensive luxury item, much like HDTVs were last year. What happens when an expensive luxury item gets a price drop? It then becomes a bargain.

> "PS3 is perceived as a luxury item, much like HDTVs were last year"

Everybody will want it – the once expensive luxury item becomes a cheap luxury item. This occurs throughout technology pricing. Buyers only come on board with price drops. Say there is a cheap HDTV and an expensive HDTV. When that expensive HDTV comes down to the price of the cheaper one, you'll get the one that was once expensive. This is how I see Wii. It's cheap now and will always be seen as cheap. Yet once PS3 is cheap, it will be perceived as a bargain – not cheap.

About half the people I know who are waiting to buy a PS3 will do so whenever the PS3 versions of *PES* and *FIFA* hit the stores. I think that Sony should probably be concerned if PS3 doesn't sell strongly over summer, and particularly leading up to and including Xmas. As long as sales keep up until then, they should be OK. Many people have been suggesting that the Xmas period will give the first truly significant indication of where the 'console wars' are headed. There is so much important stuff coming out this year, probably the next too. But this Christmas will give us our first true indication, I feel.
Nite-Owl II, psm3mag.com

Great argument, Owl. And one that makes an incredible amount of sense. Ignore the reactionaries and the Sony bashers. Wii may have captured punters' imaginations now, but it's already beginning to feel outdated to some. PS3 on the other hand will always be desirable and aspirational, and the inevitable price drop will sway even the most fervent of PlayStation haters. You've gotta keep the faith, as a wise man once said.



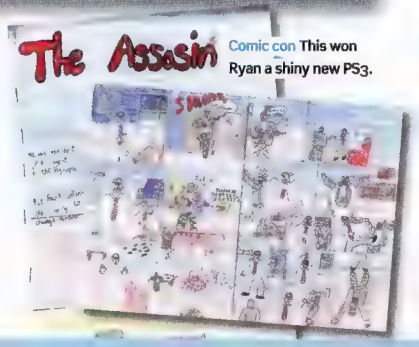
Run of the till The minute PS3 drops in price, thousands will flock to the shops to buy one. It's how it happens. It's how it's *always* happened.

Prize winner speaks

It's been a month since you sent me that PS3 for winning your competition, and I thought I should thank you for it. That was the greatest day of my life, as if Christmas had come early. My mum hadn't been going to get me one, so thank you so much. But my ma won't let me buy any more games until the middle of summer because she doesn't want them to distract me from my tests. The only games she let me get were *Fight Night* and *Call Of Duty*. Oh, well.

By the way, will there be next-gen sequels to *XIII* and *The Punisher*? Those were great games.
Ryan Cleary, Co. Derry

Ah, thank you Ryan. For the uninitiated, Ryan wrote and sketched The Assassin, an excellent – if disgustingly violent – comic to impress



Comic con This won Ryan a shiny new PS3.

"You What?"

Thanks for writing. No. Really

Mortal Kombat 2 from the PS Store is £1.99. That's a bargain for a classic like that.
[AdaM], MySpace

We agree, although we do miss the old Mega Drive controller.

I have to say I have become a pretty careless driver, but I wouldnt blame it on *Grand Theft Auto* as I have yet to flip a burning car into oncoming traffic
Colm, MySpace

That's probably for the best, eh?

The only game that

Getting on a bit

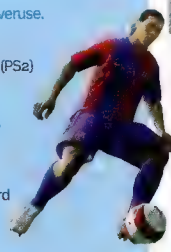
oi oi my ps2 has gone dgy wen i put a nu game in the tray n close it it says disk read error help plz coz i want 2 ply cod3! **Anon**

The truth is, your PS2 is probably on its way out. A quick Google search reveals that hundreds of people's PS2 disc drives are starting to wear out from overuse.

Cheat and tidy

how can you dive on fifa 07 (PS2) **Anon**

We're not going to tell you because diving is for babies and, er, you can't anyway.



Help centre

how do i get to the password menu on fifa street 2? **Anon**

First, remove the game from its case. Then find a hammer, put the disc on a hard surface and hit it as hard as you can until it shatters into a million pieces. Then eat the pieces. <Legal note: *Don't*>

Send to 87103 and start your message with 'PSM3'.

Corner shop Imagine feeling the stick vibrate as you turn with it. The next generation of force feedback?

us enough to take the prize in our Win A PS3 competition. And hey – it'll be mid-summer by the time you read this, Ryan. So get your mum to buy you some more games, quick. *Punisher* or *XIII* on PS3? We wish...

Royal rumble

I am truly disappointed with the Sixaxis. I've been reading reviews saying how much the motion sensing sucks, and I'm inclined to agree. There's no vibration so you can't really feel what you're doing, and you always find yourself exaggerating your movements. It's just not subtle enough. Of course, it would be silly to put vibration back into the controller again, but in the future I think Sony should add force feedback to every button. For example, when a zombie grabs you in *Resident Evil* and you have to rattle the pad to shake him off, the stick begins to throb violently. Or you could feel understeer in *Gran Turismo*.

Tang Felix, email

That is actually a genuinely brilliant idea. Imagine feeling △ juddering when you're grinding in *Tony Hawk*'s, or R1 jolting sharply with every blast of your rifle in *Call Of Duty*. Dynamic rumble. We like. Attention, third party pad designers. Stop making rubbishy controllers that hurt your hands and get started on this. You might want to patent this or something, Tang.

Free for all

Nice magazine and a smooth transition into the world of the PS3, but just one small point. On the top of the mag's cover it says that you're 'The PlayStation 3 Magazine', so you'd think for a free subscription gift, as well as all the other benefits, we'd have something we could use. No, instead some genius decides to give us a wireless PlayStation 2 controller. How about a DVD remote or memory card reader? Something we can use with our new consoles.

Baggy Big Love, email

We've taken your suggestions into consideration – and we think a memory card reader is a splendid idea – but if you'll notice this month we're giving away an HDMI cable, something that doesn't come packaged with a new PS3, but really should. Useful, no?

Tech wars

I'm getting fed up of seeing daily reports that Wii and Xbox360 worldwide sales are trouncing PS3. Every journalist and his dog seems to want to stick the knife into Sony at the moment. Sony recently announced large losses, mainly due to the production costs of the PS3, and everyone jumped on the "Look, yet more evidence of the failings of the PS3" bandwagon. Yet just a couple of days earlier the very same hacks were reporting on how Sony had priced the PS3 such that they make a loss on each console sold. It should have been

makes me lash out and be violent to people around me is *Tekken*. But that only goes as far as throwing my controller at them.

Chloe, email

As long as you aren't throwing it with force at their heads...

'Best' of the Blog

Visit PSM3MAG.COM and have your say

"Dan D is the new Pope."

Posted by: Biscuit_Box

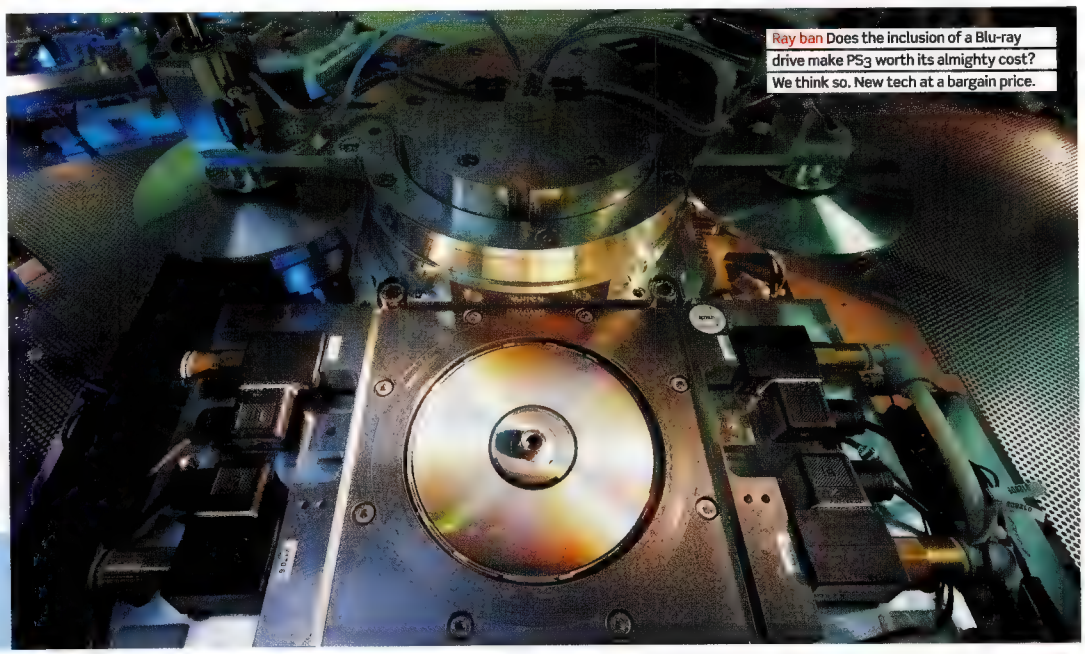
"How dare Sony insult the house of God! I will pwn their secular arses!"

Posted by: Rebekah

'Best' of the Rest

Elsewhere, SPITZ has anger management issues. "Is this the announcement that was going around the web as hot news frankly im pissed this is BS im f***** mad wheres the real news come on." That was his reaction to the launch of *The Agency*. Calm down, fella

We post every day. Mostly. Go to psm3mag.com for more.

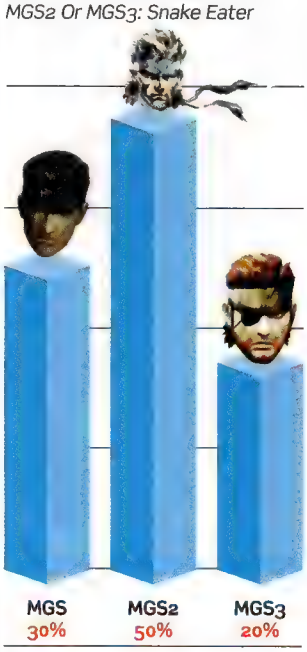


Ray ban Does the inclusion of a Blu-ray drive make PS3 worth its almighty cost? We think so. New tech at a bargain price.

Poll Position

We ask. You answer

This Month Best *MGS, MGS1, MGS2 Or MGS3: Snake Eater*



Next Month Best WW2 game: *CoD, MoH* or *Brothers in Arms?*

MySpace Cast your vote by emailing psm3@futurenet.co.uk

no surprise to anyone Sony made a loss, should it?

Wii is outselling the other two consoles hugely, but why that comparison? There is no comparison between the three. Yes they are all next-gen consoles, but that is all they have in common. Different technology, different market and therefore different sales – it's obvious to most people with a brain.

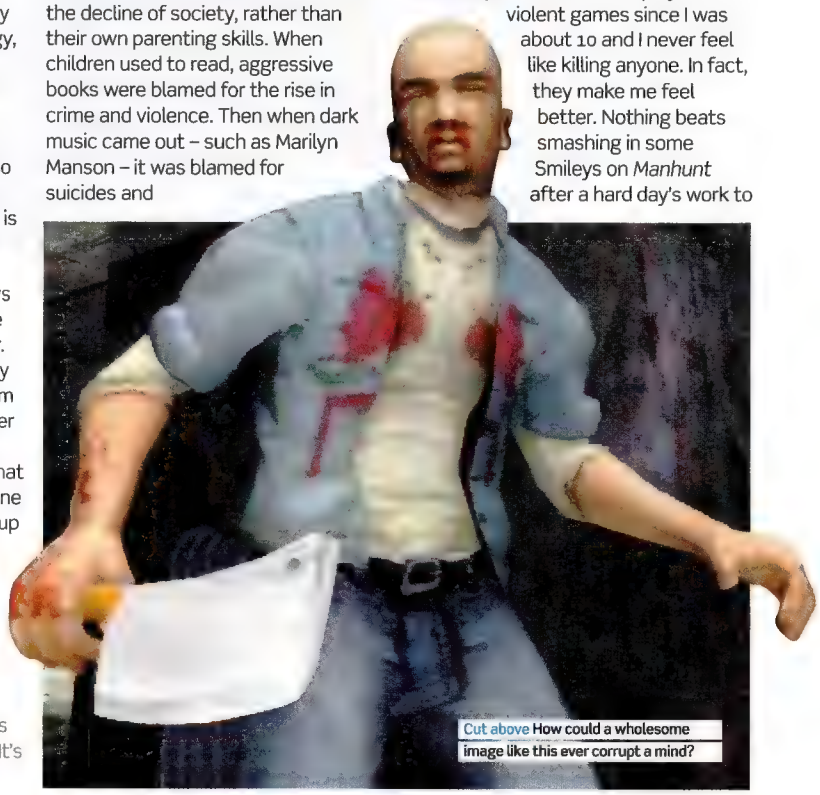
The PS3 is an expensive console, that is not in question, however it also contains a Blu-ray player. Try buying one of those for the price of a PS3. It is arguably superior in every way (aside from the GPU) to Xbox 360. Many experts are now saying the Blu-Ray vs HD-DVD format war is all over bar the fat lady, and Blu-ray will be the victor. Once the developers get off their lazy behinds and started writing code from scratch instead of porting it, the sheer power of the Cell CPU will make the Xbox look like the bag-of-spanners that it really is. I can guarantee you that one year from now, when PS3 is opening up an unassailable lead on Xbox, those same journos will be praising the PlayStation 3 for what a wonderful machine it is and how Sony have done it again.

John S, email

Finally, some positive PS3 letters. Our mail sack – well, email inbox – has been bulging with naysayers of late. It's good to finally see some optimistic gushing. Good work, John S. We're pretty much convinced that Blu-ray will become the format of choice.

The blame game

People will always blame the media for the decline of society, rather than their own parenting skills. When children used to read, aggressive books were blamed for the rise in crime and violence. Then when dark music came out – such as Marilyn Manson – it was blamed for suicides and violence. When videos became readily available they were blamed, when videogames became popular they were blamed, and now the internet been blamed as well. No matter what, media will always be blamed. I've played violent games since I was about 10 and I never feel like killing anyone. In fact, they make me feel better. Nothing beats smashing in some Smileys on *Manhunt* after a hard day's work to



Cut above How could a wholesome image like this ever corrupt a mind?

Tech Ken

Live from his retirement home, ex-Sony guru Ken Kutaragi answers your tech questions

Dear Ken

I don't think you explained very well in the magazine how to get save games from your DVD to a PS3. Please tell me in greater detail.

Malcs, email

"By 'eck. Load of tripe, this. One sec I'm Sony's PS3 overlord, next I'm sat in a re'tirement 'ome in Barnsley. At least I've got this job answerin' your questions to pass the long hours. Beats playin' gin rummy wi' Gladys any day of t'week.

Nah then, young'un... stick t'disc in yer PC or Mac, and then jam a USB stick in there. Make a folder on t' USB drive called 'PS3', all in capitals. Copy each game save into t' 'PS3' folder. Eject the USB drive and insert it into a PlayStation 3. Move across the menus until you find the 'game' icon. Scroll doon to 'save data utility' then push → (eeh, I'm speakin' in symbols. What a world.) Inside there will be an icon labelled 'USB device (flash disk)'. Select it and t' game saves will appear. Ter copy them from the USB drive to your PS3, press Ⓐ and then select 'copy'. Nurse, can I 'ave another blanket? There's a reet cold snap on.

"Well, I'll go t'foot of our stairs. There I were thinkin' this was only hap'nin ter me. But nah. Anyway, when Phil Harrison came ter visit – he brung me a bag of Werther's Originals, he's a nice lad – he said he'd heard Sony would be sortin' this out in a future firmware update. Aye, well, we can only 'ope so. Anyway, that's me done. Nurse, where's me dinner? I could eat a scabby 'orse."

Dear Ken

Just wondering if anyone else is having problems with their PS3? Since the latest system update (V1.70), has anyone else had screen freezes? When I try to exit a game, it comes out of the game but freezes before the cross media bar comes up. The only way to turn off is by holding the off/standby button for about 10 seconds.

Guchee 01, psm3mag.com

PS3 and easy PS3 screen freeze? Sony will solve the problem soon, hopefully.

@ Email us Got a question? Email it to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject 'Robo'.

release some aggression. In fact, I've gotten more angry with crappy *Sonic* games than I have ever with *Grand Theft Auto.*

Jamie Cranton, email

Stop us if we're wrong, but children do still read, right? Anyway, yes, the media will always be a scapegoat for the decline of society You just have to suck it up and ignore it. Get on with it and ignore the press. We love games. You love games. That's all that really matters, really.

Face facts

Home sounds good but instead of making a face, like in a Create-a-Character mode I want to be able to use the new EyeToy to put my own face on there. How good would it be to have your actual face on your avatar in *Home*? It would give you more of a personality, and you could pull a funny face which would be humorous.

Jonathan Sparrow, email

Well, while this could indeed be a good idea in the future, just now face-mapping technology is pretty rubs. Look at *Tony Hawk's* or *EyeToy Cameo.* They made even handsome devils like us look like twisted freak boys. Also, if you could do this in Home, you just know some lunatic would take a photo of his dong and use it as his face texture. "Hey, you've got a big nos... OH GOD ABOVE. MAKE IT GO AWAY."

Head boy **We'd rather hide behind a digital face than wander about *Home* looking like *this*.**

UK myspace a place for friends
Go to www.myspace.com/psm3 and join us

PSM3's Top Eight

MySpace readers who rock our world

Nick

ABOUT HIM

"I mainly use MySpace to pick up girls. Joke! I'm actually just a normal bloke. Honest."

INTERESTS

"Playing bass guitar for Fubar. I like to travel and have just come back from Germany."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Pro Evolution Soccer 6

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

For his informative and entertaining blogs about his travels in Germany. He's like a young Alan Whicker.

Devil's Careworker

ABOUT HIM

"My name is Danny Plummer (Haha! Get over it!), I'm 16, I like music, TV, going out at the weekends, I own an overweight cat and I have a caffeine and MySpace addiction."

WHO I'D LIKE TO MEET

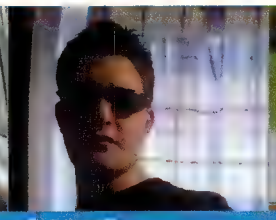
"Anyone except chavs. I don't mean to be offensive... no, actually, I do. If you're a chav, go and DIE because I can't stand people who just stand about looking angry. No chavs, please."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

LocoRoco, MGS: Portable Ops

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

Overweight cats are awesome. They just roll around the house all day mewing for food. We like his mad tirade against chavs, too.



D Dan :D

ABOUT HIM

"I'm almost 16. Gonna leave school soon! I want to be a games developer when I'm older. I like playing poker with my cousin for money. I like to relax and take things easy. I'm writing a novel. I'm on my first draft at the moment."

INTERESTS

"Poker, books, DVDs, music, all types of stuff, Justin Timberlake, Slipknot, Trivium, My Chemical Romance, Panic! At The Disco, Star Wars, Shrek, Casino Royale, Pirates of the Caribbean, Harry Potter."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Resistance: Fall of Man

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

He has his eyes set on the games industry. Good luck to him.

Mehmet

ABOUT HIM

"I'm a huge fan of Will Smith. I didn't want to like The O.C., but I do now. Lost is an immense show."

INTERESTS

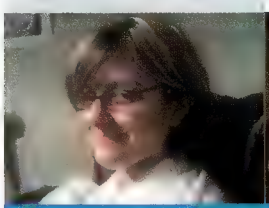
"Eating way too much, football, computer games, PlayStation 3. Ken Kutaragi is a legend!"

CURRENTLY PLAYING

NBA 2K7, Virtua Tennis 3

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

Anyone who loves dear old Ken Kutaragi is good in our books. We also love a bit of Lost. Theory: Sayid is the smoke monster.



Jeffie

ABOUT HER

"I want to be a forensic scientist."

INTERESTS

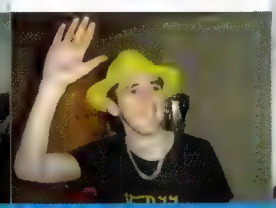
"Glaring, playing games, watching... stuff, Keane, Kasabian, Pink, Queen, Scrubs, Lazytown, Lost, Blunder, Torchwood, Ugly Betty, Green Wing, Tess Gerritsen

CURRENTLY PLAYING

FFXII, Tomb Raider Anniversary

WHY WE MADE HER TOP 8

That's quite a career she's aiming for there. Forensic science is awesome. Up to your arms in DNA, solving crimes, saving lives... ace.



GamesBeatTM

ABOUT HIM

"I'm a fun loving, laid back guy who likes to go out and have a good time. Most of my money is spent on going out which is definitely the best use for it. I go out round Sittingbourne and Rochester."

INTERESTS

"Pub, football, poker, telly, gym, stuff, funky house music, uplifting trance, Snow Patrol, Razorlight."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Guitar Hero 2

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

We spend most of our money on going out too. Well, getting out. Of prison. There was a misunderstanding in a Spar...

Nik

ABOUT HIM

"I live in Cardiff. Not Newport, which is shit and full of chavs." <Note: PSM3 Ed Dan D is from Newport>

MUSIC

"Snow Patrol, The Kooks, 3 Doors Down, Lynyrd Skynyrd, We Are Scientists, Lazlo Bane, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Jack Johnson, Jose Gonzalez, Go Betty Go, Turin Brakes, The Fray, The Fratellis."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

MotorStorm

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

He's a Scrubs fan, as his desire to be the floating head doctor attests. We love a bit of Scrubs, especially Perry Cox.

Private Myers

ABOUT HIM

"I'm Anthony, aka. The Deep Sea Diver, a name I got after jumping into a French river on a college trip. I wanna join the army and go to Iraq right now!"

INTERESTS

"I spend ages on the internet because I have no life."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Oblivion, Virtua Fighter 5

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

He really loves the British Army. So much that he has a recruitment link on his MySpace page. We'd join the army, but we're afraid of being shot at.

MySpace Want to make our Top Eight? Go to www.myspace.com/psm3 and send us a friend request. We'll welcome you onboard sharpish.

You What?

I don't like *Final Fantasy*. It's not my cup of tea.
Stevie G, MySpace
We don't like cups of tea. They're not our cup of tea. Wait a minute...

I'm teaching my dad to play *PES*. I can't wait to beat my children.
Matthew, MySpace
The RSPCC might have something to say about that.

I got a widescreen TV. But it doesn't give extra viewing, the images are just stretched

Abdul Rahaman, email
That's what they do, we're afraid.

The answer to the Stick Man Challenge is... *Silent Hill 4.*
Metal Duke, MySpace
Correct. You win... absolutely nothing.

I'm going to have an army of cats.
Alabama, MySpace
Why don't you get an army of soldiers, instead? They'd be better for invading countries and that.

I can juggle.
Praggy, MySpace
Yeah? We can't.

Reader Critic

Disagree with our reviews? Then show us how it's done

Shin Megami Tensei

A darker, sexier, weirder alternative to *Final Fantasy*...

Reader Profile

Name **Matthew Dowrick**
Location **Ormskirk, Lancs**
Fave games ***Final Fantasy, Digital Devil Saga***
About me **I'm a hardcore, disabled gamer. I'll play anything from platformers to RPGs to shoot-'em-ups, as long as they're good.**

This game, *Shin Megami Tensei: Digital Devil Saga*, is easily one of the best role-playing games I've ever come across, mainly because of the story.

You play as Serph, leader of one of many Tribes in the post-apocalyptic world of The Junkyard, fighting to reach the paradise of Nirvana. The storyline isn't resolved until the end of the sequel, so you'll have to finish both the spare-time-sapping beasts to understand everything that's going on.

As far as gameplay is concerned, both *Digital Devil Saga* titles use the Press Turn battle system. Basically, you attack the enemy and then the enemy attacks you – just like in every other role-playing game ever made – but you get bonus turns for exploiting a foe's weakness, and lose turns for missing or using an attack which has no effect. The same goes for your opponent, so you have to think carefully before you make a move.

In the second game your party can also go into superpowered Berserk Mode in battle and there are some minor changes to the Mantra Grid upgrade system.

Like all *MegaTen* titles, *Digital Devil Saga* is aimed at an adult audience, containing violence, blood, swearing and sexual themes – the kind of thing you'd never see in *Final Fantasy*.

So if you're tired of clichéd storylines and you want to play an RPG where none of the characters are angsty teenagers, or you're annoyed by terrible voice acting, get this. Just don't expect to like it immediately, and don't expect an easy ride. **Matthew Dowrick**

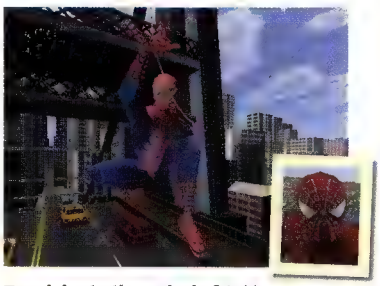
Reader Verdict

If you want a grown-up RPG that strays from the beaten path, this is it. **94**

@ email us Subject 'Critic' to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Or post a review to the usual address.

Spider-Man 2

It'll tingle your spider senses



To celebrate the arrival of *Spider-Man 3* movie, I considered buying the new game, but instead I got the previous one for a fraction of the price, remembering it scored more than 90% way back when.

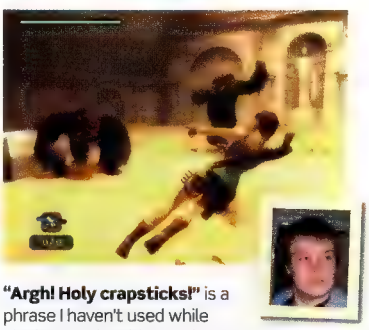
Travelling around the city is a real joy, especially catching balloons for little kids – although it's a bit odd when it's 3am and there are still kids out, losing balloons.

The fighting is varied and can be played as a generic beat-'em-up if you're lazy, but with a little flair you can spice up fights with combos and battle tricks.

The game only ever slows down when it goes indoors. This is when it becomes more rigid, and Spidey loses some of his charm. But even then it's still a million times better than the new PS3 *Spider-Man*. **James Nelms** **93**

TR Anniversary

Lara won't do as she's told



"Argh! Holy crapsticks!" is a phrase I haven't used while playing *Tomb Raider Anniversary*, but that's because the expletives I do use can't be printed. I haven't ranted and raved so much at a game since *God of War II*.

Why? The number one fun-killer for me is dodgy controls and, 11 years on from her debut, controlling Lara is still incredibly frustrating. You're forever jumping to your demise or missing ledges that you know Lara should have grabbed.

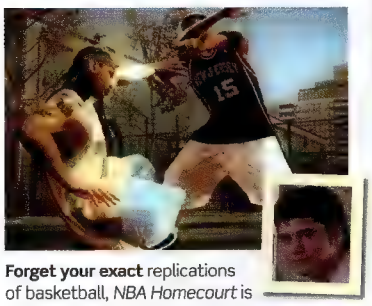
Plus, with the camera having a mind of its own, a bit more time to complete the timed-switch puzzles would have helped.

But, these issues aside, *Tomb Raider Anniversary* does do some justice to the original, which was one of my favourite games on PSone and the best in the series full stop. **Andy Johnson** **75**

"Winning your competition was the greatest day of my life"
Ryan Clearly Co Derry

NBA Homecourt

We're coming *Homecourt*...



Forget your exact replications of basketball, *NBA Homecourt* is nothing like those. Forget the tiresome rules that put many a sports fan off basketball: there is no backcourt violation in this game.

The main aim of this game is to be fun and this it wholeheartedly achieves. There is nothing more satisfying than dummying the whole opposing team, then launching yourself off the back of a team-mate for a triple dunk and getting the highest score possible in one move.

This game will leave you beaming and proud of yourself, and you will continue playing because, let's face it, who doesn't like feeling good about themselves?

This is a game where, if you look too hard, you will miss the beauty of it. Just enjoy yourself as much as possible. **Alex Goodenough**

82

PSM3
You were so right!

"Flawed, but a game you have to play for hours to really appreciate"
Decepticon, email

MGS: Portable Ops

We said "This is a compromised limitation of a classic."
PSM8g | Daniel Dawkins | 83%

"It's too hard! The controls make me sick. They are just useless, really"
James Pond, email

PSM3
You were so wrong!

YouTube The Video Zone

Out there gamer vids from the cyberdepths

Guitar Hero II: Trippolette perfection by wuLFe79

ROCKING Either Jimmy Hendrix has risen from the dead to play *Guitar Hero* or this fellow has mastered a level of plastic axe fingerage to challenge any rock god. http://tinyurl.com/yu4v7y

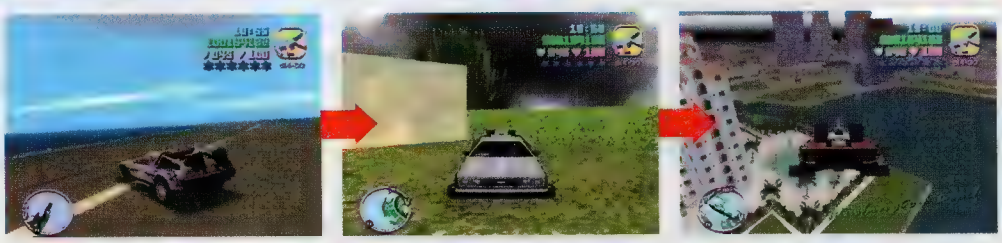
PS3 replica grill by rayishu

TASTY Not only can it handle 40-player *Resistance* deathmatches, but PS3 can apparently cook a mean steak too. At this rate PS4 will be able to write the magazine and make us tea. http://tinyurl.com/youzpg

Roxas Vs Xigbar by SonicGodzillaFan

SATIRE A fight from *Kingdom Hearts 2*, dubbed over with the dialogue from the Black Knight segment in Monty Python And The Holy Grail. Cheers to Daniel on our MySpace for flagging this up. http://tinyurl.com/24qwtd

GTA Back to the Future by Matty1110792



RETRO Now this really was acceptable in the '80s. Tommy Vercetti hitches a ride in one of Hollywood's greatest cars. Watch as the *Vice City* vandal hits 88mph in his Delorian. http://tinyurl.com/yqu78a

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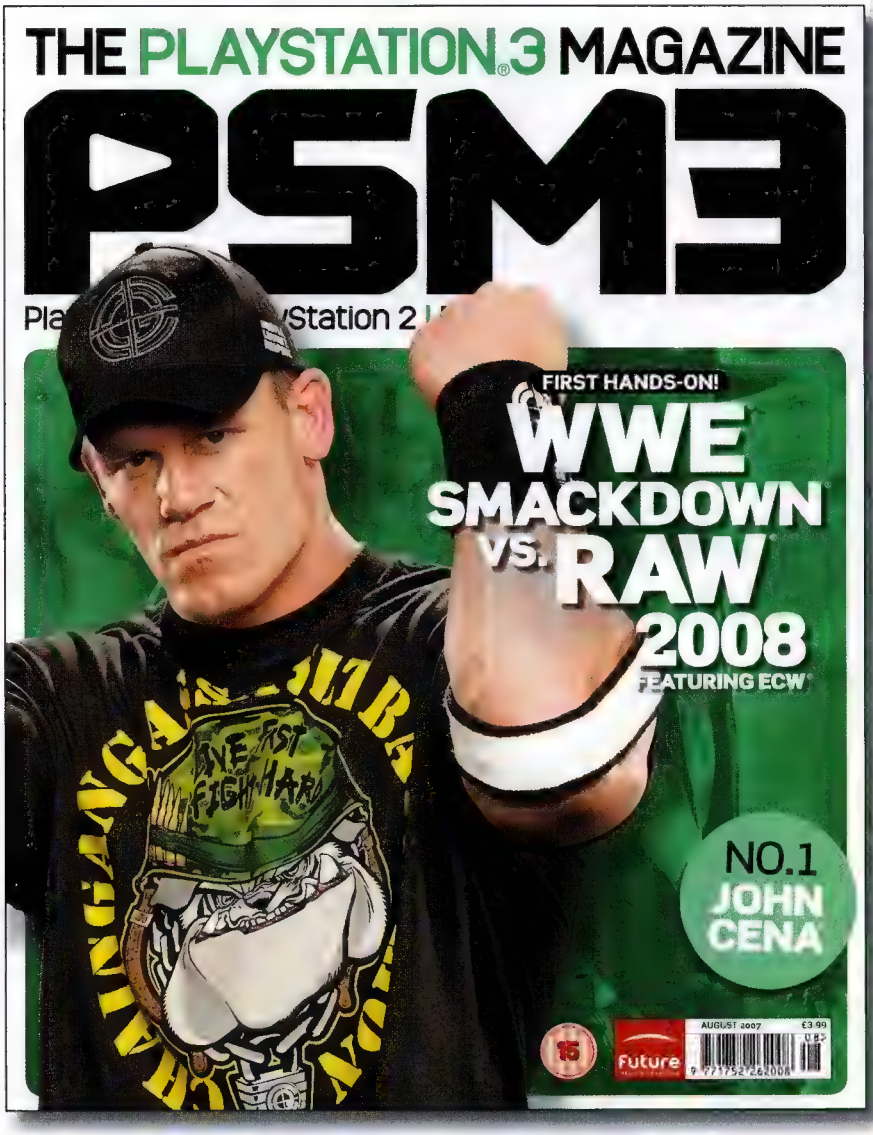

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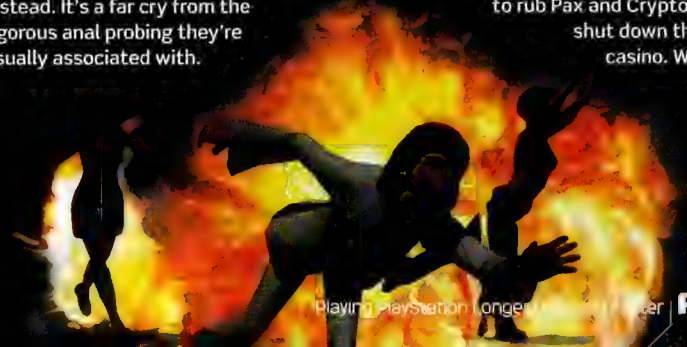
CRYPTO ATTACKS!

Attacks PS3, that is, in *Destroy All Humans! Path Of The Furon*. Expect plenty of rectal investigations...

Since writing off his spaceship while drunk as a brewery rat at the end of *DAH2*, Crypto – *Destroy All Humans*' alien anti-hero – has mellowed. It's now the '70s (the previous episodes being set in the '50s and '60s) and he's pitched up in Los Paradiso (read: Las Vegas) with his spiky-headed master, Pox. The pair have bought a casino called Space Dust and, rather than sucking the brains of the foolish humans, as usual, they're draining their wallets instead. It's a far cry from the rigorous anal probing they're usually associated with.

But you can't keep a bad alien down for long and, after a being attacked by a rival gang of dastardly entrepreneurs, Crypto soon gets a taste for destroying humans again – which is where we find him on PS3.

We've had a glimpse of the first two Story missions in the game – 'Always Bet On Grey' and 'Dinner With The Dons', which take place in Los Paradiso. The mob, named the Molinari Brothers – who just so happen to run a few gambling emporiums themselves - don't like the alien competition, so send a few hitmen to rub Pax and Crypto out and shut down their casino. When



Weapons of mass distraction

Crypto's got a whole new arsenal to claim world domination with...

Crypto strikes back and blasts the Molinari brothers' casino to bits, naturally scaring away all of their customers, and anal probes Vinnie Molinari, his brother Mikey calls in the 'Family' to whack Crypto. Taking to the air in his new saucer he kills all the arriving mobsters, but quickly learns that they'll simply keep coming, and his alert level will increase to the point where he'll be shot down unless he takes a more subtle approach.

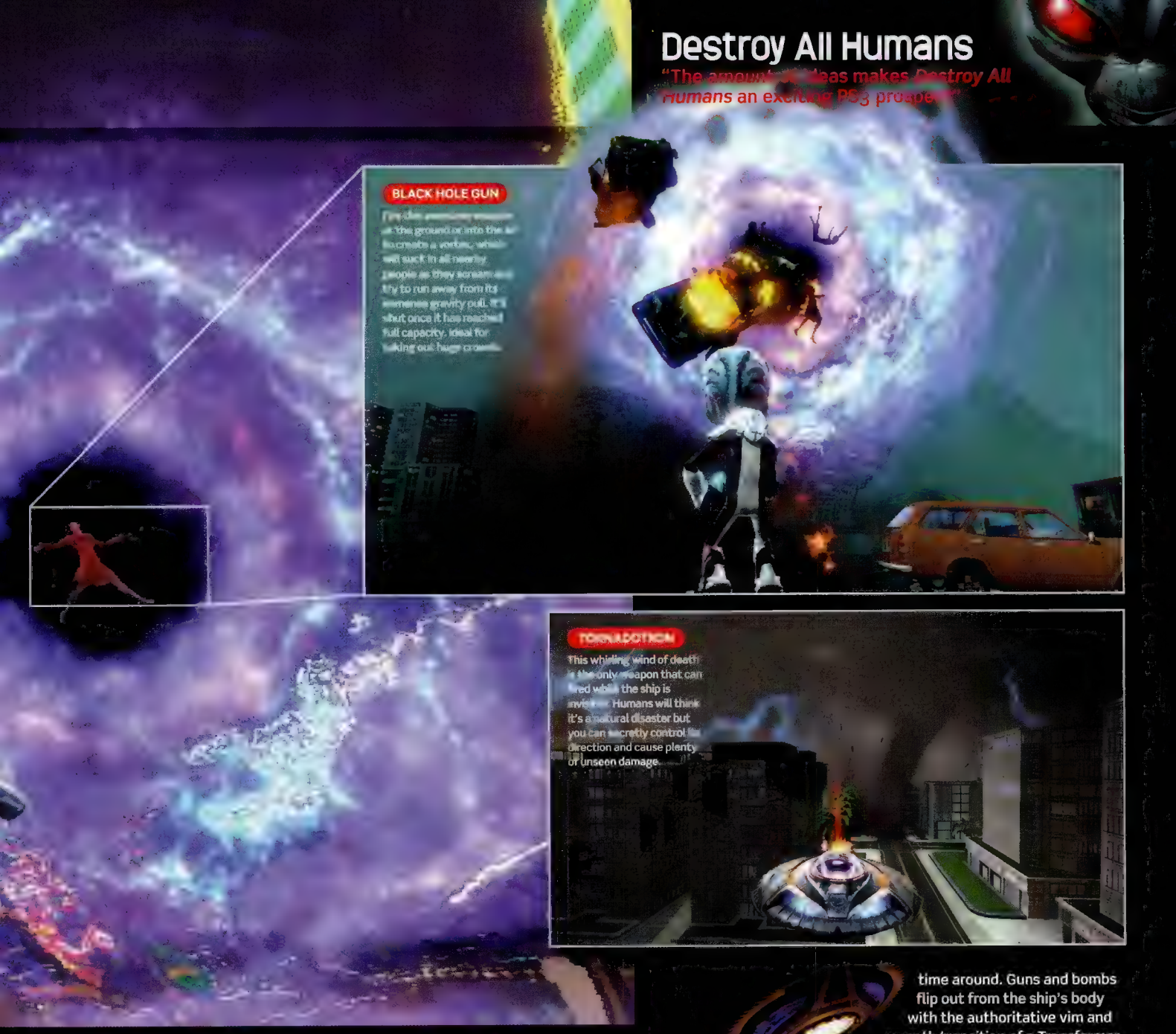
Laying low and waiting for the mob's meeting at a diner outside town to begin, Crypto uses his cloaked saucer to abduct the Don's limousine unnoticed, carries it to a remote location, body snatches the Don, and joins the meeting disguised as him. Using carefully chosen words to convince the rest of the Bosses that the little alien ain't the problem, and that it's all in the Molinari brothers' imagination, he convinces the five families not to declare war on him. Clever. The rest of *Path Of The Furon* promises to be just as involving.

Rocket from the Crypto

This third instalment in the *Destroy All Humans* series is the first on next-gen consoles and, odd as it sounds after *that* start, follows Crypto on his path to enlightenment. A mysterious oriental voice haunts his dreams and summons him to Shen Long – *DAH*'s take on Hong Kong. When he gets there – and after destroying a gang of monks – a wise old alien master teaches him about the four different paths to enlightenment – body, mind, space and time. Once you come to the end of each path – by completing missions and tasks – Crypto unlocks a new power to use against his enemies. Example? Well, if he learns all the key skills down the Path Of Time, then he can freeze time with the Temporal Fist skill and manipulate his foes. This means that, by using psychokinesis, Crypto can stack up prone people like skittles then roll a huge stone statue through them like a bowling ball. Nice. This is just one of the many fun uses of physics that *DAH* is packed with, and as Crypto unlocks new powers you'll be messing about with even more (see Weapons Of Mass Distraction).

Destroy All Humans

"The amount of ideas makes *Destroy All Humans* an exciting PS3 prospect"


BLACK HOLE GUN
TORNADOTRON
This whirling wind of death is the only weapon that can be fired while the ship is invisible. Humans will think it's a natural disaster but you can secretly control the direction and cause plenty of unseen damage.

"Stack up people like skittles then roll a huge stone into them"

While brutalising thousands of humans, you're going to need the correct tools, right? Of course you are, and the developers have taken the genius weapons of the previous games up a couple of notches. The disintegrator ray has been tweaked to the point where it'll leave its target in a pile of crumbling ash in an instant. And the discerning alien's weapon of choice, the anal probe, now has homing capabilities – which means you can fire several shots at once and they'll find their brown bullseye automatically. Ouch. The jetpack is now put to better use too, allowing Crypto to get around more freely and stalk his prey like a laser-wielding eagle. The most impressive upgrade in the small grey one's arsenal, though, has to be his new saucer. As mentioned, the old ship was totalled by an inebriated Crypto – but Pox has built him a new one, which becomes more animated and slick this time around. Guns and bombs flip out from the ship's body with the authoritative vim and smooth transition of a Transformer. And it's also got the bite to back up its bark. Try the brand new Plasma Cannon – it can really cut a swathe through enemy choppers or buildings. And there are some neat new weapons called Seeker Drones which, when fired, will home in on targets relentlessly – even if it means punching through a skyscraper to get at them.

Sandblast have used PS3's power to polish up their baby and it looks stunning. The screens barely do it justice here, because when you see the intricate details in motion – like Crypto's furrowed brow or a building being blown to bits – *DAH* really shows off its style. And, like *GTAIV*, *DAH* has grown up rather than out, which means that when you're in commercial areas packed with skyscrapers, you genuinely feel like you're being towered over by buildings. Jump in your flying saucer and you can really see –

Blast factors The buildings will fall down in a number of different ways when attacked with various tools.

Destroy all buildings!

Every, yes *every*, building can be razed to the floor if you pepper it with enough intergalactic weaponry. Frightened humans will then swarm out of their concrete nests – and that's when you can swoop in and abduct them. Good, eh?

without pop-up – how dense the areas look. And, we're told, if you raze a structure to its knees it will remain that way forever. Or until you start a new game, obviously.

It's good to talk

But there are plenty more subtle twists to differentiate this *DAH* from the previous episodes.

More thought has been applied to the conversations that you have with certain characters. For example, you can select different questions to interrogate the wise alien. Probe enough (not like that) and he'll give you clues that drive the plot on, rather than some inane babble that just stops you from zapping humans. There are five huge invasions sites (or levels) to explore on top of Los Paradiso and Shen Long. There's a take on Paris for one, then there's Sunnywood – where Crypto gets into the movies – and a top secret area. We'll hazard a guess and say it's going to be Crypto's home planet, Furon. There will also be a licensed soundtrack featuring '70s classics from genres spanning rock, funk and disco – including the wedding reception, dancefloor filler Burn, Baby, Burn. Crypto can even lead people in a dance while bodypopping and doing 'the robot' across the screen.

The amount of subtle ideas that go into *Destroy All Humans* makes it an exciting PS3 prospect. OK, it's not exactly light years away from its original formula, and if you didn't like the previous games then you probably won't get on with this, but its humour, mindless destruction and curious storyline are enough reason to be cheerily anticipating this. Let's hope Crypto delivers more than just a glossier pain in the arse than before, eh?

They're relentless in pursuit, so try to weave between buildings

Chop-pered down Although the enemy is covered in armour, it's still easy to take those whirly-birds out.

Space combat

For the first time in *DAH* history, you'll indulge in a spot of air-to-air combat. Crypto's spaceship is much quicker than the enemy choppers and comes packing more firepower, but the military copters attack in packs.

PSM3 Reckons

Sadly, we didn't get to see as much of *Path Of The Furon* as we'd like, but what we did see made us quietly optimistic. The shots here don't do it much justice but when you see the ship swooping around and blasting buildings it really does look beautiful. The tongue-in-cheek humour is fairly hit and miss, though. With the amount of damage you can cause and the promise of the usual entertaining storyline, we're pretty excited about this. More soon.

PSM3 probes the developers

Sandblast's John Knoles discusses weapons, dialogue and co-op

The *Destroy All Humans* series has been passed to a new developer in Sandblast, but do they know what makes this franchise tick? We quizzed them on all the key subjects to find out if they really know their aliens from their asses...

PSM3: How will the missions work?
John Knoles: Missions will be activated by finding a 'mission giver' in the open world, such as Crypto's holographic handler Pox or another character, and engaging in a brief conversation, which results some witty repartee, and the player choosing to accept or decline.

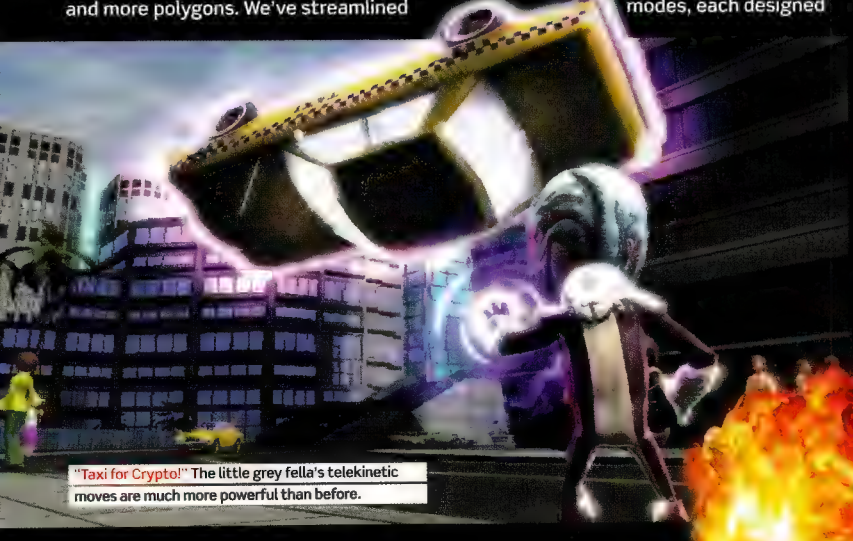
There are story, side and sandbox missions. Story missions advance the player through the plot and unlock new Invasion Sites. These generally have multiple objectives and can vary in length from a few minutes to a half hour or more. Side missions are optional, supplemental to story missions, and are shorter in duration. Sandbox missions are repeatable minigames that allow the player to come back over and over to better their scores, try the missions with new weapons or abilities, or find hidden items that were previously inaccessible.

PSM3: How will you attract fans of the series who thought the second game was too similar to the original?
JK: We've given Crypto a much bigger toolbox with which to manipulate and destroy humans in a sandbox world, but we didn't just want to add spiffy textures and more polygons. We've streamlined the controls so that now Crypto can combine mental powers, hand weapons, and jetpack flight for the first time. This opens up player discovery in combat – what happens if I use PK on a car, then fly it up to the roof of a building, stick an Ion Detonator on it, throw it and detonate it in mid-air as a group of Military army helicopters is arriving? That's just one of many possible combinations.

We want players to feel like everything they do has a tangible affect on the world. The cities are bigger, buildings are 10 times taller, and they are rammed with scores of people who fill the streets in panicked crowds when attacked, which you can swoop down on in the saucer and mass abduct like a giant vacuum cleaner. You can literally carve your name (or whatever) into the terrain or buildings with the death ray, or strafe squadrons of attack helicopters with your plasma cannons as you weave through skyscrapers.

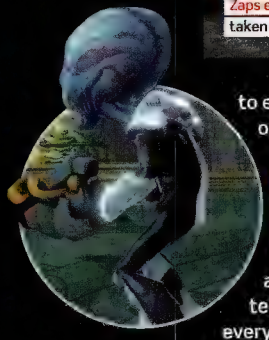
"You can literally carve your name into the buildings"

PSM3: Will the game feature co-op play?
JK: Yes. Our goal was to come up with fun new games, in which two players could have a lot of fun destroying humans while working together or against each-other. We've come up with several co-operative and Versus game modes, each designed to exploit fun new features unique to our game.



"Taxi for Crypto!" The little grey fella's telekinetic moves are much more powerful than before.

Zaps entertainment The visuals really have been taken up a notch making the lighting look superb.



PSM3: Can you really level every building so it never comes back?
JK: Well, you can level every building within every Invasion Site, and scar every square meter of terrain – but it wouldn't be too fun if everything you destroyed stayed destroyed forever. So we do bring things back when you start new missions and leave some things destroyed.

PSM3: Will the PS3 version feature online features? What will these be?
Yes, we're' planning to let the player download custom content for Crypto and his saucer, as well as win awards for various gameplay achievements.

PSM3: How have you found developing on PlayStation 3?
JK: PS3 is an extremely powerful and complex machine. There is so much you can do with it, but it requires planning and dedication. We will be fully leveraging the Cell Broadband Engine, taking advantage of its multi-processing power. This will require us to rewrite a sizeable amount of our gamecode, but it's well worth the effort to get the faster physics and AI simulations. We are also really excited about the Sixaxis controller and the new gameplay options it opens up for *Destroy All Humans*. The motion-based control on the saucer and jetpack flight is very intuitive and feels really good. We're also experimenting with ways to use it when holding things in PK, Crypto's 'psychokinetic' ability.

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Instant PlayStation justice

66 Ninja Gaiden

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"These heroes can fly. But faced with a ten-foot drop into a cavern, they have to take a lift..."

Fantastic Four page 74

PSM3 review scoring system

0-29
Rubbish
An absolute stinker and an insult to gaming. The makers should be ashamed.

30-49
Poor
Why did they do that? Some simple playtesting could have worked wonders.

50-69
All right
Hey it works, and we can see what they were trying to do. And that's about it.

70-84
Good
Worth playing, especially if you're a fan of the genre. It just lacks that touch of greatness.

85-89
Superb
This is the sweet spot. If a game scores in this zone it's definitely worth your money.

90+
Amazing
You must get this. Failure to do so would mean missing out on a real console classic.

PSM3 BUY IT
The Award
If you see this, then you should buy that game.

The Team

Cool? Refined? *Sexy*? Yes, Team PSM3 are none of these things...

Daniel Dawkins
Specialist in Extreme sports, chucking up in taxis.
Playing *Warhawk* beta test: "Argh! Cursed Sixaxis controls."

Nathan Irvine
Specialist in Sports games, pootling about on segways.
Playing *God Of War 2*: Why doesn't Kratos ride a segway?

Andy Kelly
Specialist in Role-playing games, disaffection, Fall Out Boy
Playing *The Darkness*: "As dark as the hearts of humankind."

David Cook
Specialist in Shooters, platformers, skulls.
Playing *Okami*: It's taken me so long to finish, I've aged 100 years"

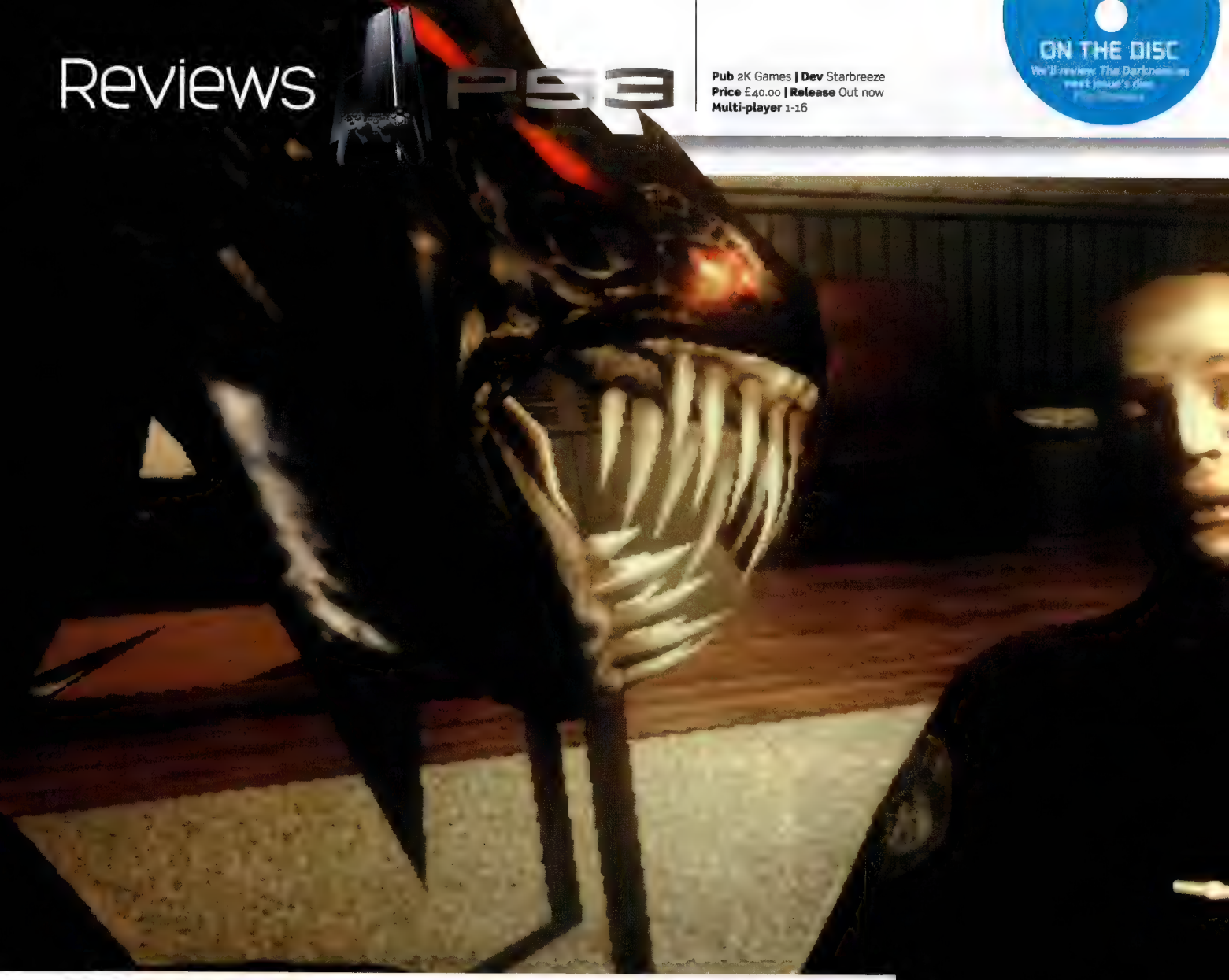
Dave Meikleham
Specialist in First-person shooters, raging at *PES*.
Playing *Rainbow Six Vegas*: "Och aye. Gamblin's braw. Haggis, etc."

Steve Bailey
Specialist in Role-playing games, hippyish peace symbols.
Playing *Dawn Of Mana*: "A new dawn as the sun sets on PS2."

Disagree with our reviews? Email your outraged rant to **psm3@futurenet.co.uk**

Pub 2K Games | **Dev** Starbreeze
Price £40.00 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player 1-16

ON THE DISC
We'll review The Darkness in next issue's disc



The Darkness

Promising dark comic book tale that fails to deliver

KNOW IT NOW

- Faithful to the great comic book? ☑
- One of PS3's most violent games? ☑
- Gorgeous and realistic graphics? ☑
- A lasting, hardcore challenge? ☒

When we put *The Darkness* on the cover of PSM3#83 we thought it was going to be one of the best games on PS3. It looks sublime, it's based on a brilliantly dark comic book series and it's from the team behind our favourite Xbox shooter, *Chronicles Of Riddick*. It had all the makings of a classic. But now, sat before the finished game, pad in hand, we're disappointed. Frowning. We're probably going to start crying in a minute.

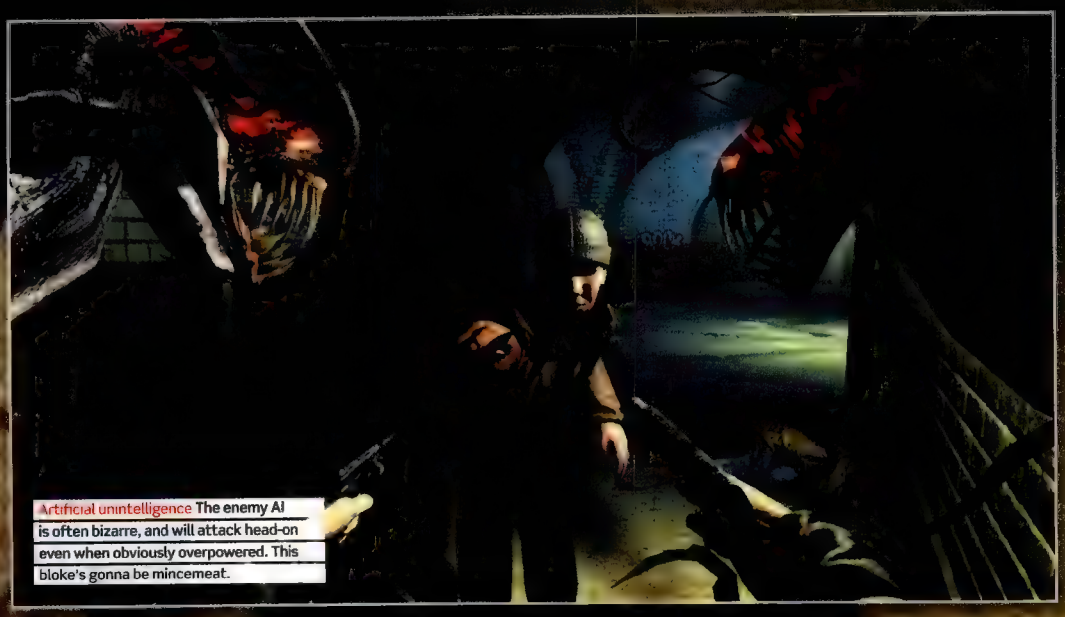
But before we do, some background. You play as Jackie Estacado, a hitman working for the Franchetti crime family in Manhattan. On the eve of your 21st birthday you survive an explosive assassination attempt orchestrated by your scheming uncle Paulie. Not only does this infuriate the saggy-chopped crime boss, but it also puts an enormous price on your head. Oh and it awakens an ancient evil brewing inside of you called The Darkness. Blimey, it never rains...

Oh, Jackie boy...

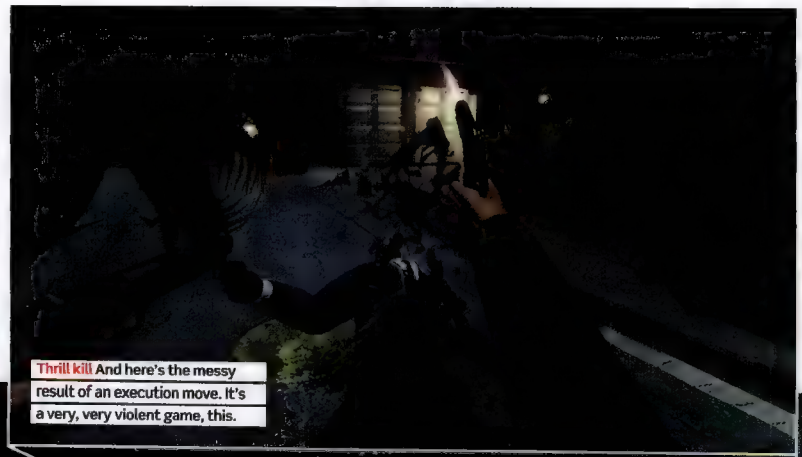
The Darkness grants Jackie incredible power. Not only does it make him resilient to gunfire and grant him incredible strength, but it also allows him to unleash a quartet of devastating supernatural powers. First, there's the Creeping Darkness. This lets you create a kind of organic spy drone to scope the area ahead for danger by crawling through vents and unlocking doors. You can also rip peoples' faces off with it by pressing R2.

Next up, the Demon Arm. This is the most entertaining of Jackie's powers.

"We *thought* it was going to be one of PS3's best games..."



Artificial unintelligence The enemy AI is often bizarre, and will attack head-on even when obviously overpowered. This bloke's gonna be mincemeat.



Thrill kill And here's the messy result of an execution move. It's a very, very violent game, this.

People person We'll be reviewing the multi-player stuff in a future issue, so watch this space...

Cool Move

Approach an enemy and press B to perform a grizzly execution move. Depending on the position, the attack is different. For example, do one from behind and you kick the victim to their knees and shoot them in the back of the head.

"You never use weapons to their fullest"

Squeeze R1 and an enormous writhing tentacle juts out in front of you like... well, like something naughty. You can then use it to latch onto items – or people – and chuck them about. And there's no weight limit, so if you see a police car you can grab it and lift it into the air effortlessly. Use it on a person and it skewers through them, killing them instantly. It's also handy for smashing lights.

Oh, yeah – lights. Before we go on to the rest of Jackie's powers, we should explain that for them to work you need to be in darkness. This means destroying lights wherever you go so that your snarling tentacles can suck up the blackness around you and charge up their powers. Later in the game your enemies cotton on to the source of your incredible strength and set up spotlights to ambush you, which presents a tactical challenge. Until you destroy the lights and spear everyone around you with your Demon Arm, that is.

But back to your powers. The Darkness Guns are unlocked just after the Demon Arm and... well, they're crap. One of them fires a blast of energy that's incredibly powerful, but drains your Darkness power in seconds. The other fires rapidly and rarely seems to be of any use. They're no better than the game's vast selection of

Demon helpers

The Darklings

A look at Jackie's sadistic demon helpers

Kamikaze This cackling loon runs towards enemies or weak spots in walls and utterly obliterates them with a package of TNT, killing himself in the process.

Gunner You unlock this trigger-happy ex-Marine in the trenches of the Otherworld. He screams "Let's kill a Commie!" while tearing the enemy to shreds. Sadistic.

Berserker Our favourite. He uses a range of melee weapons – drills, swords, hammers – to batter enemies to pieces. He urinates on their corpses too. Utterly mental.

Light Killer This fiend uses an electric device to destroy any lights in the area so boosting Jackie's Darkness power. He can kill enemies too sometimes. Useful.

normal guns and we used them *once* throughout the entire game, just after getting them. That was enough.

But after the monumental disappointment of the Darkness guns, Jackie is granted the Black Hole ability. This visually impressive and physically devastating attack creates a swirling black vortex which sucks everything and every*one* in the level into it, before disappearing and leaving everything in a big pile on the floor. You only get a few missions to use it in, but it's an untold amount of fun, especially in areas full of shattered debris and enemies.

Bits and pieces

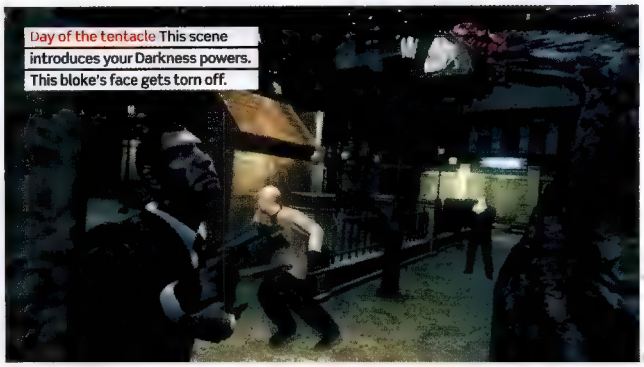
But here's the stinger. As brilliant as most of these things sound on paper, you don't really get a chance to use them to their fullest. The game's split into tiny sections of gameplay – shooting bits, story bits, RPG bits and so on. So you'll be killing mobsters on the streets of New York one minute, defeating demons in the Otherworld – Hell manifested as the demon-infested trenches of the first World War – the next, then wandering about a subway station chatting to strangers and completing side-quests. There are no extended, tactical levels that let you intelligently make the best of your Darkness powers. It's as if they chopped all the levels in half. It feels rushed.

And worse yet, the balancing is broken too. When you get the Black Hole power the game instantly becomes depressingly easy. Because it destroys all the lights in a room and instantly kills people, there's no

Comic book guy

You can unlock and read dozens of issues of the original Darkness comic as unlockable bonus content. Ace.

Fave Feature



Day of the tentacle This scene introduces your Darkness powers. This bloke's face gets torn off.

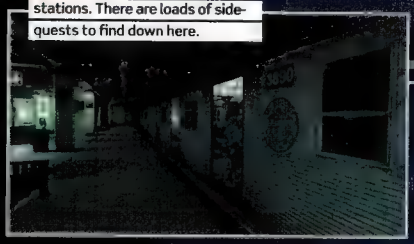
Subway map

New York, New York...

Pier 19 There are muggers down by the pier, as well as a drug smuggling ship that Jackie has to scupper to upset his uncle Paulie and lure him out of hiding.

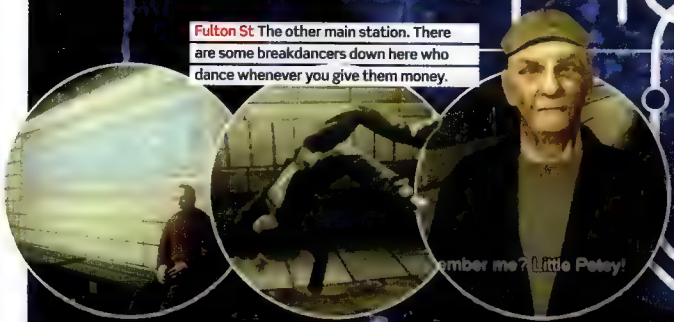
Chinatown Jackie's girlfriend lives in this area. A touching scene takes place here in her flat.

Lower East Your Aunt lives here. Her house is besieged by mafia hitmen later in the game.



Canal St One of the main subway stations. There are loads of side-quests to find down here.

Grinders Lane The Butcher works here. He's a professional disposer of bodies and helps Jackie out later in the game. He's one of your only remaining friends in NYC.

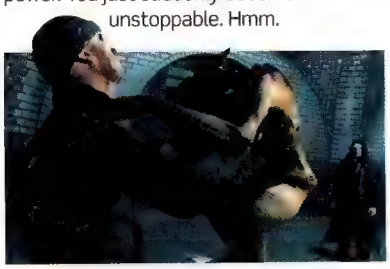


Fulton St The other main station. There are some breakdancers down here who dance whenever you give them money.

Gun crazy Sometimes gunplay is the only option, especially when it's light like this and your Darkness powers are weakened.

Mr Driller Find the workman's outfit for your Berserker Darkling, and *this* is the horrible result...

point in using anything else. You create a hole, run into the shadows, recharge and repeat until the level's clear. Another suggestion that the game was rushed – you don't feel any gradual increase in power. You just suddenly become unstoppable. Hmm.



Gang of four Later in the game you can call upon all four of your Darklings at once. It's a mini army.

The shooting itself isn't even any good. It's jerky and your movement feels light and unsubstantial. Compared to the robust, chunky first-person shooting of, say, *Killzone* or *Half-Life*, it seems tacked-on. Which makes no sense as the shooting bits in *Chronicles Of Riddick* were excellent. You can shoot someone directly in the head and get back up again. There are a hundred other similar inconsistencies.

A moan in the dark

We finished the game in two afternoons in the office. That's hardly any time at all. It really is a dismally short game, and there's no replay value because the best thing about the game is the impact of the cut-scenes, which are genuinely incredible – although the final boss battle is 99% cut-scene, suggesting that the developers didn't have time to implement the action in-game, and quickly made it a movie with only the slightest bit of interaction. Lame.

The Darkness as a whole feels like something of an anticlimax. The gorgeous visuals, incredible atmosphere, unique subject matter and immense production values are let down, and ultimately made redundant, by the abysmal pacing, sloppy design and criminal lack of length. If the developers had spent a little more time on it, it would have scored much, much more. It could even have been one of the best shooters on PlayStation 3. But as it stands, it falls short and fails to impress. We're off for that cry now.

Andy Kelly

Phone home

Ring numbers you see on posters and graffiti with a public phone for some humorous responses and, sometimes, handy hints and tips.

PSM3 Verdict

***The Darkness* contains...**

Tentacles of doom | Cinematic atmosphere
Breakdancing on subway platforms

Overall Bad pacing and a feeling of it being rushed take what could have been gold and make it bronze. Shame.

71

Pub Eidos | **Dev** Team Ninja
Price £40 | **Release** June 22
Multi-player None

ON THE DISC
See our *Ninja Gaiden* review on this month's disc
PS3/Reviews

Choking aside These awesome swords are named Dragon's Claw and Tiger's Fang. They're ideal for fast-paced combos, and look ridiculously cool to boot.

Ninja Gaiden Sigma

Follow the path of the ninja. It's the one with all the severed heads on it...

KNOW IT NOW

A finely-tuned combat system? ☑
An effortlessly cool main character? ☑
The hardest game on PlayStation 3? ☑
A game for babies and blubbing wusses? ☒

This is the gaming equivalent of a low budget, straight to video martial arts film. The ones you can buy for £3 in grotty supermarkets with names like 'Iron Target' and 'Fists of Justice'. It's all synthesised rock music, muscular Michael Bolton lookalikes kicking each other in the guts, shamelessly unrealistic action and shit, unnatural dialogue. But because you're in charge of the action in *Gaiden* rather than impassively gawping at it on Channel 5 like a gormless half-wit, it's actually brilliant.

Mainly because the fighting is perfect. Yeah, that's right. It's *perfect*. Team Ninja make legendary arcade beat-'em-up *Dead Or Alive*, so they know a thing or two about combat. And because they've focused entirely on one character rather than a cast of 30, they've created a monster. Ryu Hayabusa is harder than breaking into a safe made of diamonds. But not because he's particularly strong – it's because he's swift and athletic.

Izuna the better

By combining △ and ○ with different actions – jumping, running up walls and so on – you perform Ryu's wealth of moves, which are steadily unlocked via technique scrolls as you go through the game. Our favourite is the Izuna Drop. This lets you grab an enemy by the waist, leap into the air and come spinning down, smashing his body against the ground. And there are literally hundreds of combinations, ranging from the simple to the brain-bogglingly complicated. And they all look absolutely amazing to boot.

And while most of these *Onimusha*-alike adventure games feature static backgrounds, in *Gaiden* you can use your surroundings to your advantage. As mentioned earlier Ryu can run along walls like the Prince Of Persia, but he can also hop off them, hike up them and use them to perform graceful swan dives, appearing behind a baffled enemy and slicing them

"The fighting is perfect. Yes, that's right - perfect"

Cool Move

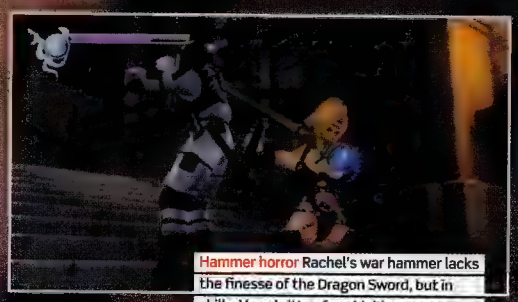
Chaining attacks is your key to victory in *Gaiden*. Clearing an entire screen of enemies with one continuous combo is entirely possible, especially if you use the walls to your advantage, or use their heads to spring yourself over the throng.

Explode off your mind Sure, we've all seen explosive barrels, but in *Gaiden* they're *lots* of fun...

Bonus fighter

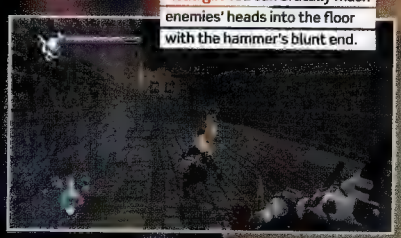
So, who's Rachel then?

A quick look at the PS3 version of Heavy Rain's exclusive playable character...

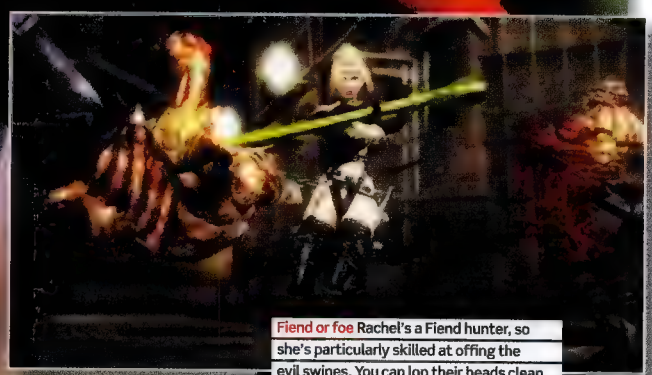


Hammer horror Rachel's war hammer lacks the finesse of the Dragon Sword, but in skilled hands it's a formidable weapon.

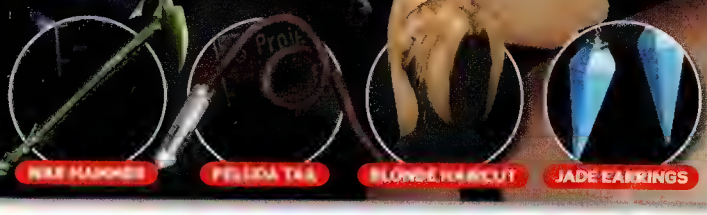
Whip it As well as the hammer, Rach can use this whip here to drag enemies towards her.



Head girl You can brutally mash enemies' heads into the floor with the hammer's blunt end.



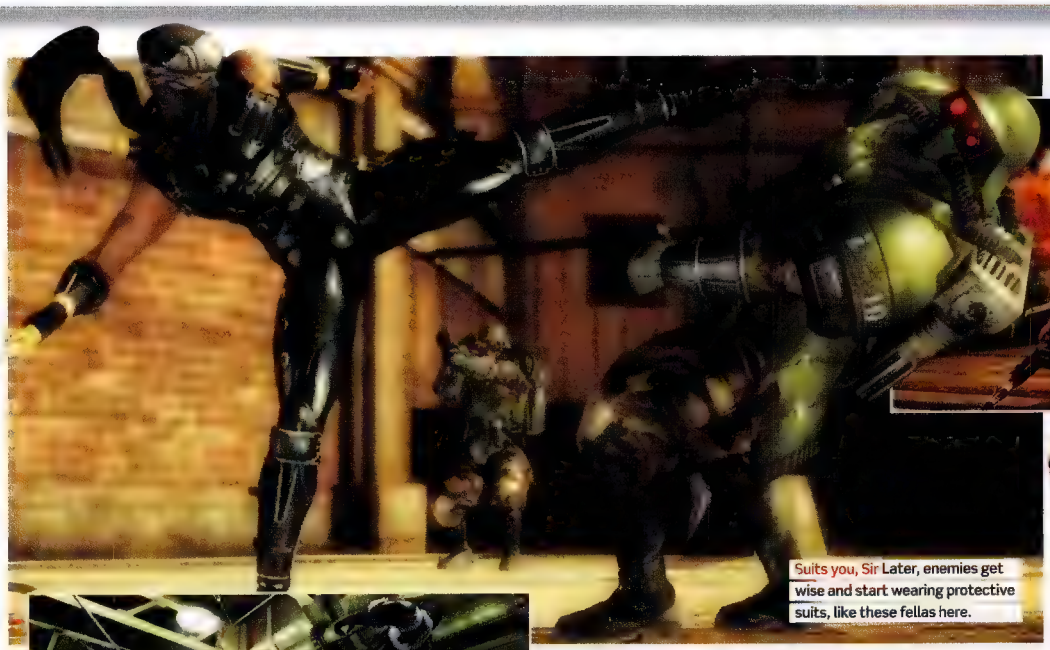
Fiend or foe Rachel's a Fiend hunter, so she's particularly skilled at offing the evil swines. You can lop their heads clean off with the hammer's blade. Ouch.



Accessories to murder Like all girls, Rachel loves to accessorise (OK, stereotyping, we know), but they also grant her special powers as well as making her look good.

Ninja Gaiden Sigma

"Demands incredible concentration and dexterity. It needs work to master"



Suits you, Sir Later, enemies get wise and start wearing protective suits, like these fellas here.

Flame on The fire and lighting effects look utterly delicious in hi-def. You can almost feel the heat.

Ship of fools This level takes place on a huge zeppelin. Naturally, it crashes at the hands of Ryu.

apart before they even know where you are. The fighting's all about precision; knowing when to block, studying enemies' movements and figuring out their various attack patterns.

Which makes it hard. Really hard. Whenever you die you can imagine the programmers leaning back in their chairs and laughing at you. In fact, the Game Over screen should have been a video of *Gaiden* creator Itagaki wearing a T-shirt saying "YOU'RE SHIT" and dancing around the room pointing and cackling. But like all good games, it's not hard because of glitches, bad balancing or anything else like that – it's hard because it demands incredible concentration and dexterity. It's a game you have to work at to master. And we don't mean a weekend's play, we mean multiple months of numerous playthroughs. This game requires a lot of attention.

The reason we haven't talked about the plot yet is because it's completely insignificant. You are Ryu Hayabusa, your village has been destroyed by an evil samurai and you want revenge. That's about as detailed a synopsis as we can provide. Or can be bothered to. But we do love the cut-scenes because the action set-pieces are amazing. Team Ninja have even re-created some of the FMV from the original Xbox version (of which this is a remake) in-game, in glorious high definition.

Pretty in pink

Die three times and you can select an easier difficulty setting – but you also have to wear this embarrassing pink arm band...

Gaiden of Eden

Oh yeah, the visuals. It's not the most atmospheric game, but it's bold, vibrantly colourful and orgasmically hi-def. It's 1080p and it *shows*. The levels themselves, although funnel-like, are peppered with extraneous detail; falling leaves, rain, rats, birds, sunsets... it really does look mint, and you'll find yourself flicking to the first-person camera from time to time just to take it all in. The animation's similarly impressive, not to mention painfully brutal. Ryu regularly lops enemies' heads off with his Dragon Sword, sending blood splashing across the floor, and the way he lightly skips across water is inspired.

Some of the level design, however, isn't. The Vigoorian imperial city, for instance. It's a sea of grey with wide, empty streets. Compared to some of the other levels – the rain-soaked zeppelin or the hazy autumnal forest – it's a dreary disappointment. It can also get repetitive – some more gameplay variation would've been welcome. But other than that, *Sigma* is one of the best action games on PS3. But do bear in mind that it's harder than anything you'll have ever played before.

Andy Kelly

Fave Feature

"Facing off against ninjas on motorbikes"

PSM3 Verdict

***Ninja Gaiden Sigma* contains...**

Brutal violence | The hardest man in games | Punishing boss battles

Overall Rewarding, tight, polished, challenging, brutal and gorgeous. Excellent stuff.

80

Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Ubisoft
Price £40 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player 1-16 online

ON THE DISC
Want more Clancy? See Endwar on the disc right now.

Suits you sir Nothing completes that terrorist look like black stealth suits. Although we struggle to imagine this guy remaining hidden in a gaudy casino.

Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Vegas

Cards on the table, this is just another Xbox port – but it's a good one...

KNOW IT NOW

New, hugely versatile cover system? ✓
Simple, streamlined squad commands? ✓
Methodical, intricate and po-faced? ✓
Joe Pesci being buried alive in his pants? ✗

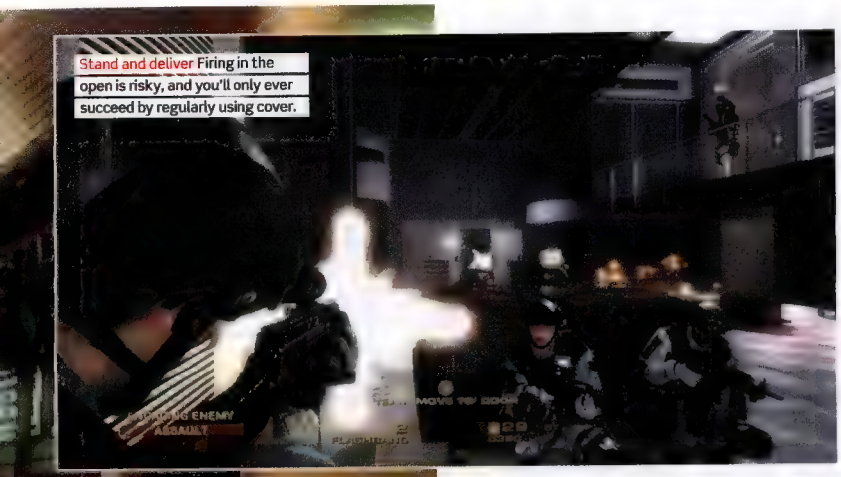
Two hours into *Rainbow Six Vegas*, and we're trudging through brown, miserable Mexican streets. So where is all the neon? The gaudy pyramids? The people blowing their life savings on the roulette wheel? All we have are blokes in sombreros. You do eventually get to storm the streets of Sin City of course, but only if you can survive the initial south of the border slog. And *Rainbow Six Dilapidated Mexican Suburbs* isn't quite as catchy, is it?

The latest title in the long line of Clancy tactical shooters sees you take control of a small group of Special Forces tasked with – you guessed it – rescuing hostages. But Vegas also brings a few new party tricks to the *Rainbow Six* formula, the biggest being a dynamic new cover system. It's similar to Xbox 360's *Gears Of War*, and a tap of L1 switches the camera to third person when you lean against an object. You can use almost anything in the environment for cover too, from slot machines to fish tanks. It really adds depth to Rainbow's firefights.

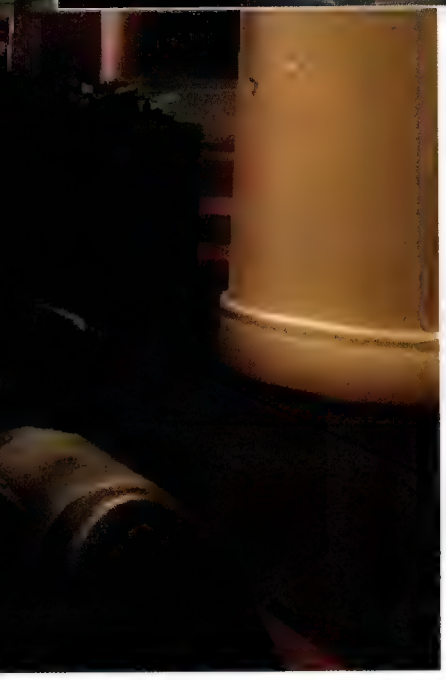
Command and conquer

Commanding your teammates works well. Borrowing the streamlined controls of *Ghost Recon*, orders can be issued with a simple press of ⊗. Advanced tactics, such as storming doors and abseiling, are all context-sensitive, so almost every aspect of *Rainbow* is immediately intuitive. It's a good thing squad tactics are so easily deployed too, because the AI is hardcore right from the off. Even on the default difficulty setting it only takes one or two bullets to drop your soldier.

But the hostage scenarios are the hardest part of the game, and you'll need to be adept at clearing rooms with surgical precision to stop casino punters leaving


Stand and deliver Firing in the open is risky, and you'll only ever succeed by regularly using cover.

Wesley Sniped Using the sniper rifle is a handy way of taking out enemies as it keeps you hidden.

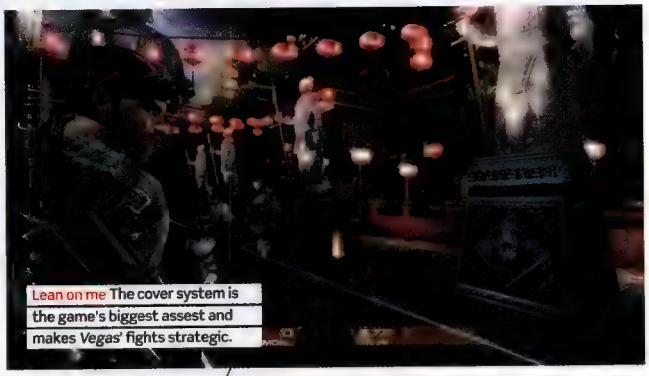


with permanent snake eyes. *Rainbow*'s vast variety of weapons help out here, and brilliantly you can stick a variety of attachments to any of them. This leads to some inventive concoctions – although we're not sure how helpful having a sniper scope on a shotgun is, it's certainly fun.

Lost in translation

Unfortunately, the goodwill generated by many of these features is eroded by the game's drab appearance. *Vegas* seems to have lost a little of its graphical edge on the trip from Xbox, with the PS3 version looking washed out and suffering from some aliasing issues. There are a few nice touches – blackjack machines that spit chips when shot, say – but Vegas is still visually disappointing. It's hardly a dealbreaker, but there's no question that Sony's black brute is capable of more.

What you get from the game, though, depends on how much you're willing to put in. Gamers prepared to clear rooms one by one, slowly and strategically, will enjoy Vegas' more methodical type of action. Placed next to *Resistance* or *Call Of Duty*, it's the thinking man's shooter. It may not be immediately gratifying, but there's an innate satisfaction in infiltrating a room with a plan – say, individually 'tagging' enemies to be taken out before you enter – and then seeing your men execute that plan with Alan Sugar-like ruthlessness.

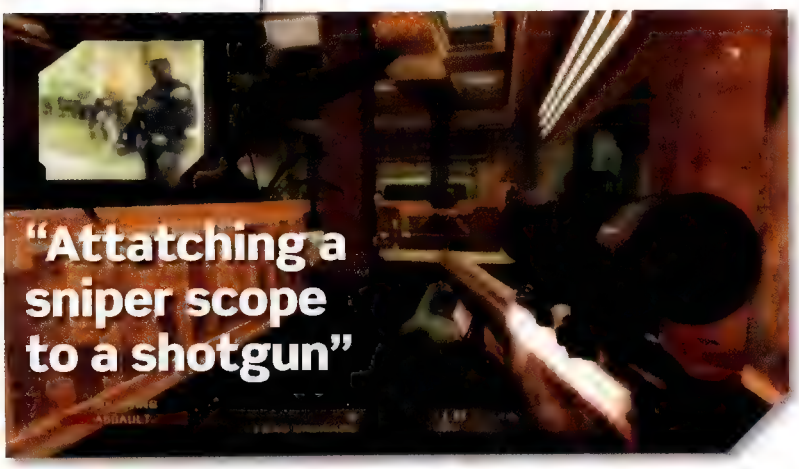

Lean on me The cover system is the game's biggest assest and makes *Vegas*' fights strategic.

Load of old rope

The bits where you rappel off buildings are ace, and there's no better way of killing a terrorist than by shooting them upside down while hanging on a bit of rope. Flashy.

Vegas takes masses of dedication, though, and those looking for quick thrills will be disappointed. Couple this with the fact that the foundations of the series are built on trial and error – you'll die a shedload until you know every square inch of an area – and you're left with a game that demands commitment without always delivering thrills. However, those willing to perservere will find *Rainbow Six Vegas* a slow-burner, but worthy of anyone's time. After all, how many games let you rappel off a building and throw a grenade through a window, before kneecapping a huge group of thugs as a grizzly finale? Not a lot. Sin City? You bet it is. **Dave Meikleham**

Fave Feature



PSM3 Verdict

***Rainbow Six Vegas* contains...**
A terrific cover system | Solid squad controls | Inventive weapons | Sombreros

Overall A fine, methodical shooter. If you work for it, you'll find a pot of gold at the end of this *Rainbow*.

76

Pub EA Games | **Dev** EA Games
Price £40 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player None

ON THE DISC
Harry Potter casts his magic on this month's disc

Room with a view The Common Room is a great place to test out Potter's trickery – and almost every piece of furniture can be manipulated as you wish.

Got wood Using 'Accio', Harry can pull these logs into the fire. Ideal for those chilly Hogwarts nights.

Harry Potter And The Order Of The Phoenix

Magical visuals, but dull missions fail to cast an enchanting spell

KNOW IT NOW

A gloriously designed HD Hogwarts? ☑
Sixaxis controls that are actually decent? ☑
Irritating, bumbling ginger sidekick? ☑
Well thought out mission design? ☒

"Get lost Potter!" cries one pupil, foolishly, as we use a flick of the Sixaxis tilt pad to lift him into the air, swooshing him around like a wailing swingball. Sadly, despite making arguably the best use of Sony's tilt pad yet, and recreating the rowdy and degenerate Hogwarts with awe-inspiring scale, EA's latest Harry Potter game falls down on the least magical element of all – basic mission structure and lack of variety.

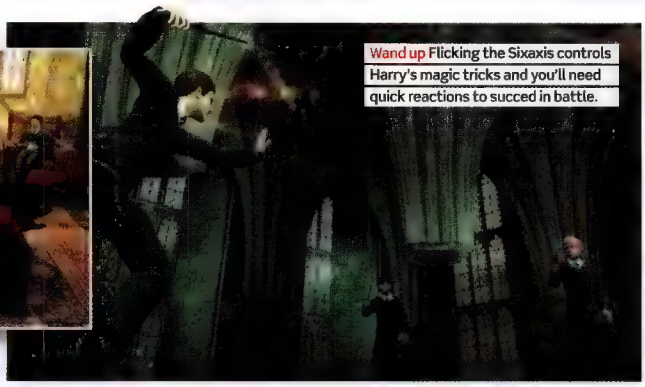
The latest *Potter* – the series' first incarnation on PS3 – is based on the upcoming fifth film. Over the course of your adventure you'll battle the evil lord Voldemort, train an army of fellow wizards and float rubber ducks in the air with your magical prowess. This magic is the game's biggest success, with EA delivering a satisfying system through a combination of the right stick and Sixaxis controls.

Dirty Harry

Performing Harry's repertoire of magic tricks is refreshingly simple, and the majority of the Potter's dark arts come to life with a flick of the Sixaxis. The motion controls are enjoyable and you genuinely feel a connection between your movements and events on-screen. Jerk the pad upwards and Harry will send items flying skywards. Thrust it forwards and things will hurtle across the room. The physics engine is also fairly robust, which give the game's levitating powers added charm. The controls aren't always totally responsive, though, and you'll often find yourself flapping around like Tim Howard in a crowded penalty area.

But it's clear that EA have at least put some thought into designing Hogwarts to juxtapose properly with Harry's magical abilities. Most of the objects you see littering the grounds can be interacted with in some manner. Whether it's opening

Uplifting 'Wingardium Leviosa' is used to levitate objects. Thrust upwards on the pad.



Wand up Flicking the Sixaxis controls Harry's magic tricks and you'll need quick reactions to succed in battle.

Spark life Fights in *Order Of The Phoenix* look spectacular at times. Even if they're a bit beardy.

Push off Move the pad forwards and Potter will aggressively push stuff in front of him. Bad chair.

curtains with a touch of 'Accio', rearranging furniture with a dash of 'Depulso' or simply battering your fellow pupils with stone benches using 'Wingardium Leviosa', it all works very well.

Which makes it even more disappointing that equal thought wasn't given to the mission design. EA have tried to inject a little of *Grand Theft Auto*'s open-ended nature into proceedings and you're usually free to tackle objectives in whatever order you see fit. Unfortunately, the majority of missions lack any real complexity – talk to character, perform a trick, you're done – and are simply too one-dimensional to remain engaging for very long. Worse still, most quickly dissolve into mindless point 'A' to 'B' collection missions, with 'A' often being a magician's mile from 'B'.

Pottering around

EA have an tendency to guide gamers by the hand (though in the case of *Potter* it's by the feet – a magical set of footsteps guide you between objectives), so it seems strange that certain missions are so vaguely defined. You're told what to do during cut-scenes but not always where to go. On more than one occasion we were left aimlessly wandering the cavernous halls of Hogwarts talking to everyone in sight because we had no idea what to do next. Sidekicks Hermione and Ron follow you around everywhere, and are supposed to give helpful tips, but mostly just spout the same useless dialogue over and over again. During one mission, while trying to find five – horribly elusive – gargoyles, the pair just kept telling us to check the school's notice board. Right, cheers for that.

Potter's shortcomings really are unfortunate, because it's clear that, with a little more ingenuity – more multi-layered, complex missions – EA could have crafted something that stood out from your usual banal licensed title. Production values, as with most EA games, are excellent, with the sweeping countryside that stretches for miles around the school looking particularly impressive. But while Hazza may be pixel-perfect down to every HD pimple, poor animation quickly shatters the illusion. He runs like his favourite wand has been rammed where the sun don't shine, and in the heat of battle characters display the range of emotions found in your average Keanu Reeves role.

In many ways, Harry's latest adventure feels rushed, with the opening third of the game feeling like a glorified tutorial. While the mechanics of *Potter*'s trickery are handled well, the lack of imagination shown in the rest of the game lets the experience down badly. He may have learnt a few new tricks, but Harry is still a long way from getting that A-grade pass. Even magical visuals can't save *Order Of The Phoenix* from banality. **Dave Meikleham**

Wind in the Willow

One of Harry's teachers is none other than Warwick Davis, the little guy from Willow and the Leprechaun films.

PS2 Review

Harry Potter & The Order Of The Pheonix

How does *Harry* handle on Sony's older box of tricks?

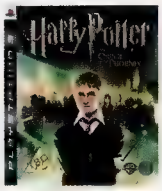
Surprisingly well, as it happens. Content-wise this is almost exactly the same as its PS3 big bro, with all the same locations available to explore – minus that lick of HD paint, of course.

The loss of motion controls from the next-gen version is compensated for by some good old fashioned PS2 rumble, which really lends the game's spells an added sense of weight.

Technically, it looks impressive too. But *Order Of The Phoenix* is still hampered by the same weak mission design, meaning PS2 Potter is one for younger gamers and franchise obsessives only.

56

PSM3 Verdict



***Harry Potter* contains...**
Decent Sixaxis controls | Impressive physics | Dull missions | Ginger kids

Overall It has promise, but poor missions scupper the magic. Potter fans may persist, mind.

55

Pub 2K Games | **Dev** Visual Concepts
Price £40 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player 1-4

ON THE DISC
Fantastic Four will be on the disc next issue

Flaming hell Between missions you'll take part in racing segments with the Human Torch. They're not much fun, though, and fail to convey any real sense of speed.

Stretch Armstrong Elastic bloke is far from fantastic, and is the last hero you should use.

Fantastic Four Rise Of The Silver Surfer

Fantastic? They're not even adequate

A few minutes into *Fantastic Four* you're offered clear indication into just how absurd that moniker really is. Presented with a small drop into a cavern, the foursome – who between them can fly, manipulate gravity and pick up lampposts – have to *take a lift*, which drops down all of *ten feet*. Neither heroic nor super, these opening moments of *FF* are indicative of the experience to follow.

Like its predecessor, this *FF* takes the form of a simple scrolling beat-em-up. Mind-numbingly simple. The foursome's moves can be pulled off through a combo of L2 and the face buttons. While diverting for a short time – especially Invisible Woman's telekinesis – the appeal soon wears off, mainly thanks to predictable enemy AI and samey environments.

Fusion moves, which see two members of the Four working together, fare considerably better though. It's a genuine thrill to see the team combining their powers to devastating effect, whether it's swinging The Thing around like a giant bowling ball of death with Mr Fantastic or using the Invisible Woman to light the Human Torch's balls of gas (ahem).

From hero to zero

Team play will only get you so far, though, and you'll quickly find that the four characters are poorly balanced. You're allowed to upgrade each hero's abilities between missions but this doesn't change the fact that it's easier to plough into the onslaughts of generic henchman with The Thing than anyone else. Contrast this with the stretchy Mr Fantastic, who is criminally ineffectual. While the Human Torch gets to soar through the air, Stretcho's main job is punching elevated switches.

The game never lifts itself above repetitive button mashing, save for some on-rails racing sections with the Human Torch – complete with unresponsive Sixaxis controls – and aneurysm-baiting boss battles. Still, *Silver Surfer* is almost bearable in multi-player, although we'd imagine trying to play with three friends – given that you'd probably have to simultaneously hold them at gunpoint – might prove difficult. *Fantastic Four* feels completely archaic and offers little more than *Golden Axe* did almost two decades ago. This is not what PlayStation 3 should be about. Avoid.

Dave Meikleham

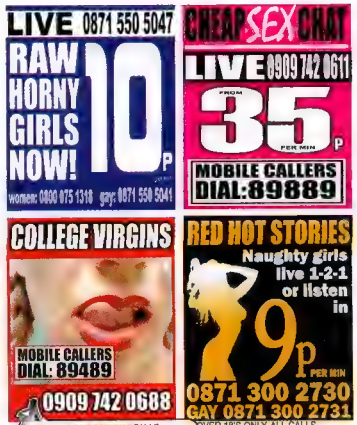
Chuck up The Thing handles a lot like Hulk in *Ultimate Destruction*, and can throw almost any object around.

PSM3 Verdict

***Fantastic 4* contains...**
Rubbish combat | Rubbish heroes | Rubbish boss battles | Rubbish racing bits

Overall A dull, uninspired car crash of a game. A complete waste of PlayStation 3's power.

39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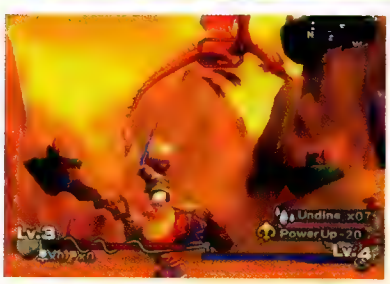
PS2

Pub Square Enix | **Dev** Square Enix
Price $50 (£25) | **Release** Out now (US), TBC (UK)
Multi-player None

ON THE DISC
We'll review Mana on the disc next month
PS2/Reviews

Dizzied rascals Push objects into enemies to panic them. Hit them and they'll drop stat-boosting medals.



Heavy medals Dozens of medals can be unlocked, and equipped at the start of each chapter to boost Geldy.

Hero to zero At the start of each chapter, your stats are reset to force you to get stuck into battles and level yourself up.

IMPORT

Dawn Of Mana

Where 'RPG' stands for 'Rowdy Physics Game'...

Role-playing games aren't just getting bigger, they're also *thinking* bigger. These days, if they're not attempting to blend real-time combat with random battling, they're slotting in minigames that are arguably comprehensive enough to survive as standalone PSP titles. And so up steps *Dawn Of Mana*, the latest in a moderately well-known Square Enix franchise that never quite needled its way into the public eye in quite the same way as *Final Fantasy* and *Kingdom Hearts* managed. Its big thought? Physics. Sacks of physics. The kind of physics that even very few first-person shooters on PlayStation have managed to rival.

While *Dawn Of Mana* may look like a typical Japanese RPG, it's actually an elaborate action game. Sure, there's a twee plot, illustrated by many a splendid cut-scene, that sees blonde teen manboy Keldy fighting to save the Mana Tree from a bunch of evil arseholes. But that's virtually where the RPGness ends – chapters are broken up into what are, effectively, themed arenas that need to be battled through in order to progress. Your weapons? A whip, a sword and a catapult. Plus, of course, science's own knuckle-duster – physics. Knock a boulder into a group of enemies and it'll send them scattering and panicking. Set fire to a bale of hay then boot it into the fray before using your whip to fling one scorched baddie into another. Shoot enchanted seeds from your catapult to unleash whirlwinds or earth-powered magnetism points, which send all nearby objects into a swirl that damages everything that gets in the way. Thwack a tree with your sword, and it might drop a handful of rocket mangoes – yes, *rocket mangoes* – which will then fizzle all over the place like drunken fireworks.

Rough with the smooth

There are plenty of moments throughout when it all sings beautifully and *Dawn Of Mana* feels like a fresh and chaotic new approach to adventuring, lending solidity and a feeling of improvisational freedom to a handsome game world, the kind we're rarely allowed to interact with. Other times, however, it can feel a little too fuzzy, that the controls aren't quite sharp enough – especially Keldy's floaty jumps – to wring the most out of it all. And sometimes, you might just want a section to end, because the enemy types begin to feel repetitive.

Bosh pit
As if to emphasise its combat-led nature, *Mana* has 32 arena battles against various groups of enemies, with *pets* to be unlocked as back-up.

If you can settle into it, however, and approach the game with your action hat on – it's a game built for skill-based replay rather than linear completion – you'll certainly have more of a hoot with *Mana* than with, say, *Rogue Galaxy*. It can feel a little clumsy sometimes, but moderate persistence will allow the vision behind the game to shine through. It's unlike very few other role-playing games on PlayStation 2, for better and for worse. **Steve Bailey**

PSM3 Verdict

***Dawn of Mana* contains...**
A fabulous soundtrack | Better physics than many PS3 games | Relentless action

Overall Looks gorgeous, but the obsessive focus on combat can be as irritating as it is exciting.

79

VIDEOGAME CULTURE
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MIRROR'S EDGE
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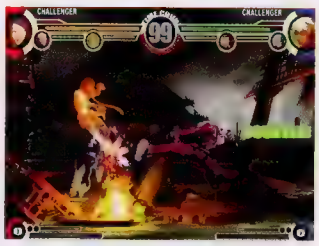
Ignition | PS2 | Out now

King of Fighters XI

The tenth king is dead. Long live the king

Finding your razor wire undies just too comfortable these days? Allow us to introduce your new instrument of personal torture: *King Of Fighters XI*.

The series has always been the hardcore alternative to Capcom's *Street Fighter* and again, casual users need not apply.



Mai oh Mai

There are 33 characters available from the start and 14 hidden. That includes Mai – a PS2 bonus after a no-show in the arcade game.

You'll unlock most of them in the Challenge mode, which gives you special conditions and criteria to fulfil. There's also an Endless mode, which does as you'd expect.

You choose three characters and send them into battle. In the main game you can switch them out as you see fit, with mid-combo 'quick shifts' and the new 'saving shifts'. The latter let you duck out, mid-thrashing, in exchange for skill stocks which replenish over time.

The new judgement system decides the winner in a time-up situation: interestingly, but often annoyingly, it's not always the least-damaged fighter.

Fighting styles are varied and some characters even change style mid-bout. But the presentation outside bouts is basic and clumsy and choosing everything takes longer than it really should.

The game gets incredibly difficult in later stages. But beneath its basic and dated appearance, you'll find a deep, varied and rewarding fighting game. Learning its intricacies is a mammoth task that will keep fans happy, but do buy some padding for your walls. **Justin Towell**

PSM3 Verdict

A very big, deep, 2D scrapper. Not stunning, but worthy. **77**

Flats all, folks Character sprites and backgrounds look basic, but are just about passable.

Atari | PSP | June 15

DragonBall Z: Shin Budokai 2

When anime attacks

Even whippersnappers who missed the Dragon Ball animated series will be hyper over the retina-scorching colour scheme and frenetic fighting that this beat-'em-up offers.

You work your way through the story by protecting cities and bringing the pain to enemies and maniacal bosses. Voice acting keeps the story interesting, but you can skip it all in Arcade mode.

Fights rely on special moves such as building your Ki and blasting folk with flaming energy balls, and so does the game – barely straying from the punch-and-powers formula. **Rachel Weber** **61**

Atari | PSP | Out Now

Hot Pixel

Not so much 'hot' as 'tepid'

It had to happen. PSP has finally got its *Wario Ware*. Sadly, this is a charmless version of the Nintendo favorite. Following the quick-fire nature of *WW, Hot Pixel* is broken up into a succession of quick fire minigames. While certain games are temporarily diverting and show some character – drawing a line for a stock market crash while businessmen cry in the background – most are tedious affairs that show little imagination and repeat too often. The 'urban' flavour falls flat and some games are just in bad taste – a peeping tom mission, anyone? The rapid succession of games may be suited for handheld play, but they lack the variety to remain compelling. **Dave Meikleham** **52**

Black Bean | PS2 | Out now

Great Battles of Rome

Making history lessons even more dull

Great Battles recreates epic rucks from Roman history coupled with live-action footage from History Channel documentaries. The real-time war-mongering lets you hire, heal and command squads of upgradeable troops through Roman and Celtic campaigns.

Regiments, however, are barely controllable, lurching erratically even with deft touches of the analogue stick. Meanwhile, the premise of 'making education fun' is marred by archaic visuals, awkward controls and a lack of tactical subtlety. The legions of scenarios feel disjointed and distant. *Crap Battles Of Rome* would be more apt. **Mike Jennings** **35**

Black Bean | PSP | Out Now

SBK Superbikes PSP

Hard bike game gets a whole lot harder

Have you got a spare month on your hands? Because that's how long it'll take to master the subtlety of handling in *SBK Superbikes*.

Like its PS2 big brother, the PSP version of the hardcore bike racer is unashamedly hard. Meanwhile, the vast array of customisation options and race parameters that can be adjusted are impressive, but are wasted by the constraints of the hardware. The PSP nubbin is simply too inaccurate to provide the level of control that races demand.

There are nice touches – the first-person view delivers a real sensation of speed – and the number of modes, including wireless multi-player, is impressive. Sadly, the unresponsive controls mean you'll spend too much time eating asphalt. Shame, really. **Dave Meikleham** **58**

PSM3 Recommends

The best games from the last few months

God Of War 2
Sony | PS2
"Like running eyes-first into a wall of beauty, *God Of War 2* is yet another of PS2's last-minute masterpieces. Absolutely captivating throughout. Get it."
PSM3 Rating 93%

Okami
Capcom | PS2
"Quite brilliant, with substance enough to live up to its stunning visuals. Peaceful, elegant, you'll play it for hours. The most beautiful game on PS2."
PSM3 Rating 95%

Virtua Fighter 5
Sega | PS3
"Technically flawless, the result of over a decade's evolution and perhaps the best scrapper ever. But *Virtua Fighter 5* is such an acquired taste."
PSM3 Rating 87%

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ON THE BLOG
Find out what we're reviewing next issue at: psm3mag.com

Tomb Raider Anniversary
"Looks lovely, smacking you in the face with PS2-quality visuals"

505 Game Street | PSP | June 29

Exit 2

PSP's most stylish puzzler returns

The sequel to last year's charming, if eccentric, side-scrolling, block-shoving puzzler sees the shadowy protagonist Mr Esc tasked with saving more damsels in distress from peril. Part platformer, part puzzler, it feels similar to *Prince Of Persia* – complete with the same clunky jumping – but with a stronger puzzle element. The puzzles are now considerably harder than they were before, and uninitiated players will have to get to grips with *Exit*'s extensive tutorial.

The internal logic that runs through the game is as unforgiving as ever – push a block in the wrong direction and you'll have to start the whole level again – and copious amounts of trial and error are the only way to save everyone in a level. There's very little here that *Exit* players won't have seen before, though, with the new additions only stretching to a few new character types that need to be saved. Ultimately, it's hard to justify forking out 30 quid for this when you can buy the original for a tenner. But fans of the original will lap up the 110 new stages. **Dave Meikleham**

74

Eidos | PSP | Out now

Tomb Raider Anniversary PSP

PSP celebrates Lara's birthday in style

Phew. Gone are the cumbersome camera controls from *Legend*. Now you can move and manipulate your view at the same time, with the shoulders buttons used for camera adjustment. It makes a huge difference, simply because you can see where Lara is jumping, allowing you to explore with more confidence.

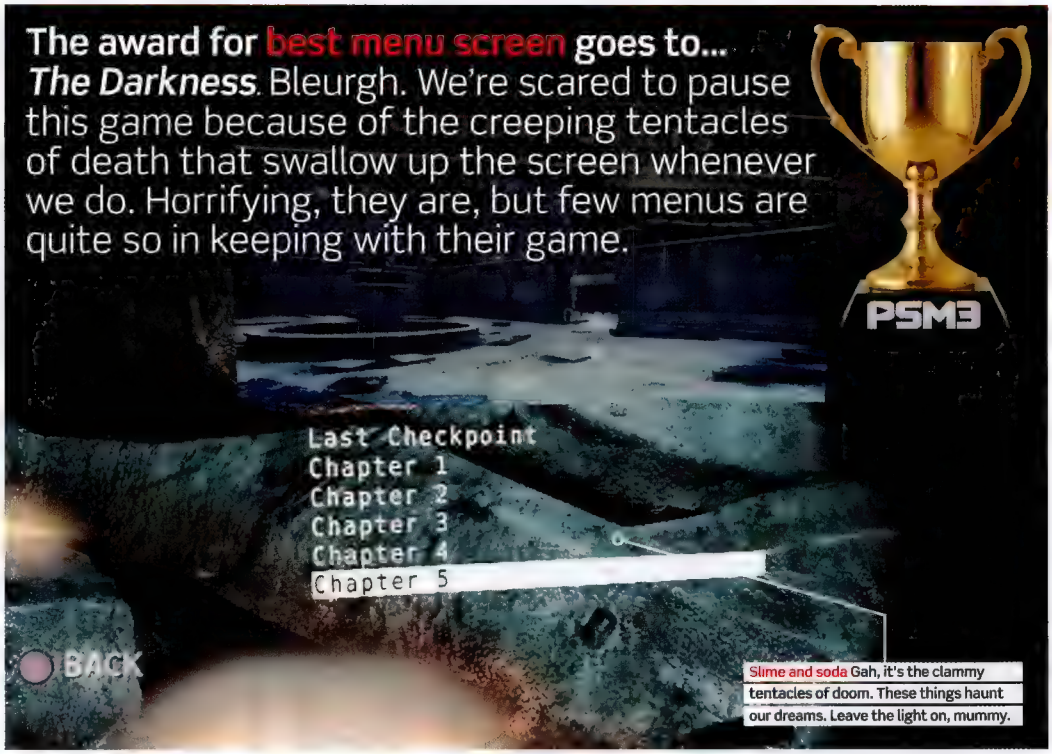
Exploration is the key to *Anniversary*'s success, combining the slick controls of *Legend* with the thrill of navigating the unknown. The platforming is massively compulsive, thanks to frequent checkpoints that makes it easy to dip in and out for short play sessions.

Content-wise it's identical to the PS2 version, even throwing in a few ad-hoc multi-player missions for good measure. It looks stunning as well, frequently smacking you in the face with PS2-quality visuals. The frame-rate may dip at times, but that can't stop *Tomb Raider Anniversary* from being a near-essential addition to PSP's library. **Dave Meikleham**

85

PSM3 Awards

The highlights (and lowlights) of this month's reviews



The award for best menu screen goes to... *The Darkness*. Bleurgh. We're scared to pause this game because of the creeping tentacles of death that swallow up the screen whenever we do. Horrifying, they are, but few menus are quite so in keeping with their game.

Slime and soda Gah, it's the clammy tentacles of doom. These things haunt our dreams. Leave the light on, mummy.

The dashed hopes award goes to...

Harry Potter

Looks lovely, makes great use of the Sixaxis... but the actual missions themselves aren't really all that. Pity, we'd genuinely expected great things.

The nicest surprise award goes to...

Dawn Of Mana

There aren't a great many decent games left for the dear old PS2 – but this RPG-cum-scrapper is something of a little gem. Investigation recommended.

Hi-Score Table

☐	Tomb Raider PSP	p79 85%
☐	Ninja Gaiden Sigma	p66 80%
☐	Dawn Of Mana	p76 79%
☐	King Of Fighters XI	p78 77%
☐	Rainbow Six Vegas	p70 76%
☐	Exit 2	p79 74%
☐	The Darkness	p62 71%
☐	Dragon Ball Z: SB2	p78 61%
☐	SBK Superbikes PSP	p78 58%
☐	Harry Potter	p72 55%
☐	Hot Pixel	p78 52%
☐	Fantastic Four	p74 39%
☐	Great Battles Of Rome	p78 35%

Buyer Beware! The games they're afraid to send us

Stateshift Midas

A racing game set "in a not-too-distant future" where "economical instability has led to bloody conflict". Nothing sells games like the magic words "economical instability", does it?

Wacky Races: Motor Madness Blast Entertainment

Should we play this cheap cartoon tie-in, or should we have another go on *Burnout*? Gosh, it's a tricky decision...

MaXXed Out Racing: Nitro Midas

You can tell how 'street' and 'urban' this game is by the capital x's. This is a sequel, apparently. We don't remember the first game, but then again, we don't particularly care either. This looks mince.

ON THE DISC
Try and figure out what Hideo is all about

How you can LARN MONE¥ predicting the FUTURE of GAME$

Financial analysts, stockbrokers and scientists are all paid to predict the future... so why not the same for games? PSM3 reveals the work of Game Futurists, who use science to predict the future of games, putting their theories to the test and showing you how to be a paid up speculator...

Want to know where *GTA5* will be set? A quick trawl of any online games forum will yield about five 'definite' answers, as eager fans and deluded semi-insiders jostle to present the truth. The problem, of course, is that nobody knows – save the development team at Rockstar – so the speculation is invariably based on 'inside' leaks from 'someone who works in the Birmingham branch of Game', or on obscure clues in existing games – like the graffiti in *San Andreas* that 'sort-of' looks like the initials of Tokyo airport, proving as a 'fact' it's set in Japan. More surprising yet, there's a hidden world of professional 'games speculators' or 'Futurists', often funded by big business, who are using scientific methods to work out *exactly* where *GTA5* might be set – and being paid for the privilege.

Speculation or 'futurism' exists in many shapes and forms. Technology futurists speculate about what our computers will be like in 20 years, physics futurists ponder about how string theory will affect our view of the universe, and media futurists speculate about actors' new projects. Game futurism is like any predictive science, but if you've wandered the internet searching for it for more than two hours, you'll probably end up with little crackpot theories from rabid fans who believe their analysis rules the speculation universe.

So where are the professional game speculators and how do they operate? Well, unsurprisingly, games speculators tend not to post their findings on random forums. Instead, if you can find them, they will probably have their own professional website. Second of all, speculators run in groups. To be an effective speculator of any type, you need to analyse many differing points of view,

Game Speculation

especially the dissenting or conflicting ones. Speculation groups allow speculators to bounce their opinions off one another to eliminate conflicting evidence and isolate facts, refining their theories to higher probability outcomes.

Speculate to accumulate

Lastly, you need to know where to find them. Speculation groups spend many hours watching trailers frame-by-frame, logging pages of information and stats, and interviewing important figureheads. You're not going to find them handing out their theories on flyers or on random websites. Instead, look for speculation groups in places like Game or anime conventions. You'll generally be able to find a group presenting their findings in the form of a panel or a main event. If you're looking for written speculation, try trade/industry publications. Every so often you'll be able to find a feature detailing step-by-step detective work on the next game in a series. Finally, many groups have their own publications or events to present their findings in.

Many speculators earn a living by working as games journalists, but very often the 'Market Analyst' position in games development companies involves speculation work. SAEC games, a US trading card games specialist, employs a speculator to report on releases from rival CCG's (Collectible Card Games). UK tech investment company, Durlacher, used to employ a games analyst, Nick Gibson, who has written for PSM3. In the US, Wedbush Morgan Securites' Michael Pachter is paid to make bold predictions about publishers like EA, Take Two and Microsoft.

Four power Think you know exactly what will happen in *GTAIV*? You could earn cash.

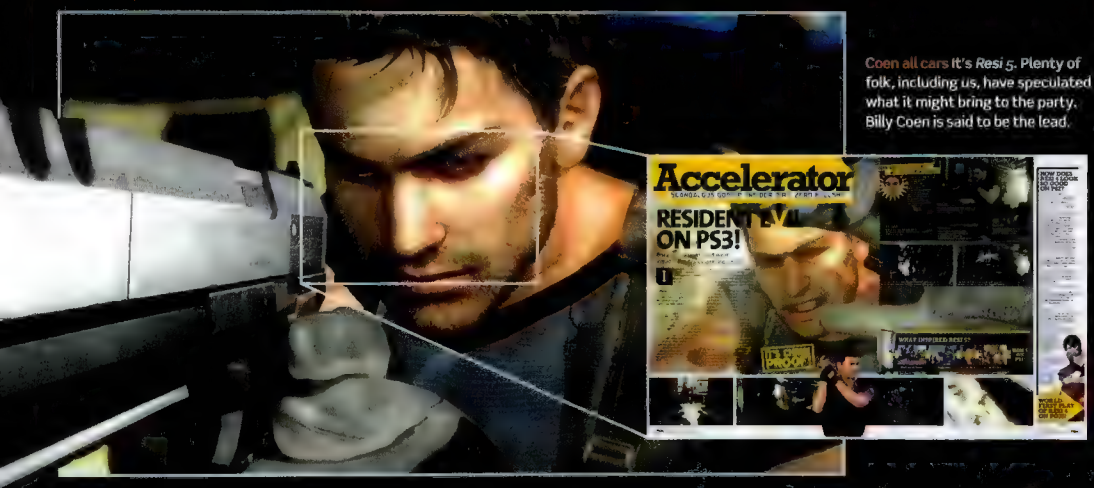
Fight for your right People constantly mull over what another *Street Fighter* might bring.

The issue, of course, is what separates a professional speculator from an average joe. For example, anyone could say, "If they were to make another Street Fighter, Ryu would definitely be in it". The difference between these casual thoughts and professional speculation basically comes down to evidence.

Speculators have to ask questions and gain answers to almost everything that has happened, and everything that *may* happen, to a particular game series. In the previous example, the pertinent questions would be "Will there be another *Street Fighter*? Why? Why would Ryu be a character? What evidence is there for that theory? What has Capcom said (in interviews or otherwise) they'll be doing and what have they done in the past?"

After all the questions are asked, speculators need to figure out if the information gained is worthwhile. Game companies and developers purposefully keep most of their information secret, to avoid leaking information to their competitors, or to drum up fan excitement before release. Speculators need to be detectives, crime scene investigators, and interrogators all at once, wading through the multitudes of interviews, trailers, fan commentary and other information for anything that might provide a recognisable pattern by which to base a theory on. Sometimes it will be the slightest flash of an image between frames which will provide the largest breakthrough toward a concrete image of a future game – it sounds daft, but the developers of *Haze* on PS3 used a similar technique (see page 85).

"Speculators spends hours watching trailers..."



Coen all cars It's *Resi 5*. Plenty of folk, including us, have speculated what it might bring to the party. Billy Coen is said to be the lead.

Bauer of power

Robert Bauer is a professional game speculator, and a presenter at Anime USA.

How game speculation works...

A step-by-step guide to forming valid theories about future games

Game speculator Robert Bauer on the step-by-step speculation process from evidence to theory, based on his analysis of *Kingdom Hearts*...

1 Always start with the big clues

The things that are so big and obvious, they almost have to be pointing at something important, and they almost can't be red herrings. (Note the 'almost' though – nothing's certain.) The big clue in *Kingdom Hearts 2*, barring the trailers is Sora's Anti-Form. Every so often Sora turns, without meaning to, into a berserk Heartless for a few minutes. In another situation, that might just be a cool power boost he gets from his back-story – except that in the boss fights where it usually happens, it's crippling, and no character ever says one word about it. You can make a case that no-one even knows about it, possibly including Sora.

2 Work out what the clues really mean

Sora's been a Heartless before, and apparently that part of him is still there. It's not under his control – you don't ever pick Anti-Form off a menu. It's always an accident. Some of the capabilities you lose – reaction commands and magic – are things that would require thinking. Anti-form is just a mindless killing machine. Sora is losing control – and his mind – to the darkness inside him.

3 Does the evidence work?

Yep. There's a line in *KH1*: "Those who give in to the darkness are never the same again." Also, at the end of *KH2*, Riku says "We'll be the darkness," and Sora agrees. It's not that it's something Sora wouldn't say, but it's unusual enough to draw attention, to suggest that this might be foreshadowing. When Sora finds out he has a Nobody, he says "When was I a Heartless?"

4 Look at all the other possibilities

It's possible the characters all know about Anti-form and think it's not a big deal and nothing to do with being Heartless, but it seems more likely that none of them know about it, including Sora – that he blanks out in anti-form, and doesn't remember it. But why would nobody mention it? The things Sora can do get talked about – his keyblade, his magic, summons, forms. Even when he does a limit, the characters call each other's names to coordinate it. This is a pretty notable power, too – Sora's appearance and abilities change drastically. He *looks* like a Heartless. Why wouldn't this be worth mentioning? Because the party always vanishes when it happens, so Donald and Goofy wouldn't know. It can't happen in solo fights – like the ones against Riku and Roxas – so they wouldn't know. When you add everything up, it seems more likely that no-one talks about it because no-one *knows* about it, rather than no-one talking about it because they think it's unimportant.

5 Check for the last piece of evidence

For the last tie-in, there's the first secret trailer at the end of *KH2*. Sora's Kingdom Key is point-down in the dust. It's possible the scene takes place in the past, before he got it. However, Heartless can't touch a keyblade. Sora loses the ability to wield it in Anti-form.

6 What does it all mean?

We think Sora is still part Heartless. From a storytelling perspective, this can't be a minor thing. It's never been talked about or resolved. So it's going to be in the next game. The temporary change in Anti-form doesn't make Sora drop the keyblade, or lose control-- but if the *KH2* secret trailer is relevant he eventually will. So the theory: Sora will eventually lose control. The darkness in him will take over, against his will, and he'll become a real Heartless again, but more powerful than before.

7 Make your prediction

Now the cycle starts over. Take that theory as a new clue, and begin again. If Sora turns Heartless, he's strong-willed enough to make a Nobody – and so Roxas is coming back. And what does Riku do about this? For that matter, how did Riku's keyblade end up in the dust?

an anime and games convention in Virginia (www.animeusa.com), currently working on an ongoing *Kingdom Hearts* speculative theory for next year's convention. "The biggest problem is that you never really have anything concrete to work with," he says. "It gets frustrating, because you're reasoning from limited data and half your theory is guesswork. For example, before *KH2* came out, I thought Zexion might have once been a keyblade wielder, back when he was a human named Lenzo. They'd gone to a deliberate effort not to reveal his weapon, and he always appeared unarmed. I reasoned they wouldn't hide it if it didn't matter, and I couldn't think of any weapon except the keyblade worth hiding. Then it turned out he fought with a book. It's difficult, but it wouldn't be any fun if it were easy."

Speculators work on priority and probability, placing information into categories of how likely the information is to be true, how likely the information is to be relevant and, lastly, how likely the information is to actually appear in, or affect, the next game in the series. The truest information, such as canonical information from previous games is generally considered first, at which point the relevant pieces of information are fished out, and arranged into patterns to form an image of a future game.

Lost in a *Haze* There's so much misinformation about *Haze* doing the rounds.

Unfortunately, speculation creates its own complication. Once you have a pattern then it becomes entered into the information queue, and further speculations are built on it. If the original pattern turns out to be false, then the entire theory topples down.

An example of this is, as Bauer stated before, the theory that Zexion wasn't always a nobody, but a keyblade wielder. Many theories arose from this one fact. Zexion was a manipulator, and many thought that it was him who got Xehanort to split his heart from himself in the first place. Other people thought that perhaps Zexion was fighting in the Keyblade wars, or was one of the knights in the trailer. However, once it was revealed that the hiding of Zexion's weapon had no

What's next for Kingdom Hearts?

A professional Games Speculator places his bets...

Hearts to hearts *Kingdom Hearts* is a potential goldmine for speculators.

Many Kingdom Hearts fans have a theory that knowing a lot of the future of Kingdom Hearts is right around the corner. We're watching the movies and comparing it to the teaser from *KH2*, we're reading, hoping to squeeze a tiny hint of what to what the next game in the series is going to look like. It's no easy task.

Gaming speculation and future-telling is always a rocky road. In nine times out of ten, game developers don't know what they're planning a little

How often does Games Speculation succeed?

Barista Hamlyn's hack series was predicted thoroughly since day one. When the Tony Hawk games started undergirttes (Underground, American Wasteland) the speculation about the control scheme and new game elements was rather spot on. A classic example of speculation coming through comes from the early days of fighting games. It was a speculation bonanza when the first Gamion appeared (Backin' Street Fighter 2 Turbo and Killer Instinct). Speculators became mathematicians, figuring out how combos work, why they work, how to make them better and how companies were implementing them. The information gathered was done mostly in-house but had some dependents too. Soon, fighting game after fighting game was released with the intent of building a better combo

And the failures?

The Xenosaga series had notable flubs. For months, speculators based ideas on the Xenogears title for PSone. When it was revealed that the two games had nothing in common (officially), most (not all) theories fell apart. Final Fantasy X-2 was also a giant let down. Square Enix did a great job with red herrings. The original analysis suggested a 'Ressurection quest', but the final game was completely seperate. They totally missed the ATB battle system too

first place when they release games. For example, Tetsuya Nomura said in 2006 that a *KH2 Final Mix* wouldn't be made, now here we are in 2007 and... it has been.

All change

There are many reasons for this. Plans can change at the drop of a hat. Other times, developers like to, well, lie. Regardless, it's the job of us speculators to come up with a structured analysis of what the future holds.

So what do we know for certain? Not much, but there's plenty that has a huge probability of being true. For one, Nomura said that the game that teased *Re:Chain of Memories* is not the Kingdom Hearts 3 but the next game in the series. This syncs with the fact that Nomura previously stated that Kingdom Hearts: Sora's story and the release seems to bring a four-game story to a complete end. Fans need not worry, this obviously the game is an effective new Kingdom Hearts 3. It's also worth that it has something to do with keyblades, heartless and of course, Mickey Mouse. They all appear in the teaser video. Even though the trade may be different, you can be sure the two games will be connected, though Sora, Riku, and Kairi may not be the heroes of this new instalment. When asked in an interview if these characters would return, Nomura replied, "I can't say."

Speaking of ways the previous *KH* games will synch with this new instalment, our favourite 'multiform' boss of all time seems to be coming back. In *KH2FM* there is an optional battle to fight against the tall knight in the teaser trailer. In the dialogue before the fight, the knight mentions Xehanort many times, alluding to a direct link between the two. In addition, he mentions two names of people he has "failed" (assumed to be the two other knights): Ven and Aqua. Now, for you linguistics buffs out there, Sora, Kairi, and Riku are derivations of 'sky' 'sea/water', and 'shore/land' respectively. And 'ventus' and aqua are Latin for 'water' and 'Sky', showing yet another parallel between the two games. Therefore, the brown haired tall knight had been theorized by many to be a 'Riku' analogy.

There are still some problems with this theory, the first of which pertains to the keyblades the knights are seen taking in the original KH2 teaser video. Aqua, Ven and a mysterious third knight pick up the Way to the Dawn (Riku's keyblade), the Keyblade of Darkness (Mickey's keyblade), and the Keyblade of Light (Sora's keyblade) respectively. The meanings of the new character's names don't synch to the 'current' owner of their keyblades. In addition, Kairi was never originally a keyblade wielder.

According to *KH* mythos, three keyblades exist, one for each realm. Sora's was the Keyblade of the realm of light, Riku's is the keyblade of the realm of Twilight between the light and darkness, and Mickey's was the keyblade of the world of darkness. Kairi's keyblade kind of came out of nowhere, handed to her via Riku, and wasn't one of the originals. Of course, in both of the new teaser videos, there is a graveyard filled with keyblades, so how valid that original mythos is has come into question.

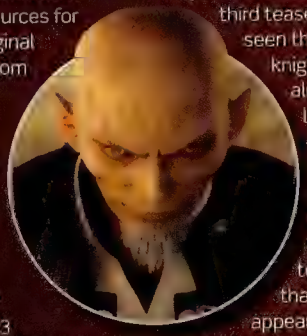
Taking the Mickey

Another question that has been asked is "When do these videos take place?" In the end of the teaser vids, we see Mickey standing in front of the large stone tower the old man the knights were fighting created. However, Mickey is not holding the keyblade of darkness, which was his weapon of choice in *KH1* and KH2. He is in fact holding the 'star seeker' – the keyblade you get from Yen Sid's tower at the beginning of *KH2*, which makes many fans think that both videos occur before Mickey obtained the Keyblade of Darkness. So it's entirely possible that *Kingdom Hearts 3* is actually a prequel to the other two games.

Many fans believe that the two teaser videos (from *KH2* and *Re:CoM*) don't coincide in terms of timing at all. First of all, the shadowy figures approaching the knights have different appearances. The figure from the *KH2* video is standing upright and appears to be wearing an Organization XIII cloak whereas the figure from the final movie video is hunched over and is wearing attire much closer to the original garb of the boss of *Kingdom Hearts 1*, the fake Ansem. It's also important to look at the keyblades the three knights

are wielding. In the original teaser, the three knights pick up the three keyblades of our present day heroes before looking to the approaching figure. However, in the final mix video, they have no other keyblades than their own. If the two videos coincide, and the two shadowy figures are in fact one in the same, the knights should have two keyblades to fight with during their fight with the mysterious old man. However, they aren't even seen dropping or storing the three keyblades at the beginning of the *KH2FM* video, they simply aren't present in the first place.

As the videos themselves come up dry in terms of info, speculators need to look toward other sources for ideas. In the original teaser videos from *KH1*, random pieces of information flashed before the screen accompanied by numbers. These bits of info came to be known as the '13 points.' One was "You are the source of all Heartless." In the video, the old man spawns a new Heartless-like character. He also seems to have the ability to control discarded keyblades, and to open up Kingdom Hearts. Though the possibility of the old man being the "source of all heartless" that the 13 points refer to is slim, it is obvious that this character has complete control and mastery of 'the heart'. Add to this that *KH2* alludes to the fact that keyblade wielders and heartless existed before the events of *KH1*, and its pretty clear that this old guy has something to do with the greater mysteries of the *KH* universe, such as what were keyblades used for before they came into the possession of our current *KH2* heroes?



In theory

Here is a look at some of the theories there are no evidence for, but might wet your whistle for plot goodness.

1) Xehanort was a hero in the Keyblade War.

Xehanort obviously wasn't some random schmuck from the past. He had to have lost his memory for a reason, perhaps due to some sort of climactic battle? Also his hair is incredibly similar to the hairstyle of the tall knight.

2) Ven is a descendant of Sora/Roxas.

Anyone who has watched the third teaser video has seen that the young knight (Ven) looks almost exactly like Roxas. Now we already know he is a completely new character, since Nomura told us so, but that similarity in appearance can't just be coincidental.

3) The Tall Knight has an 'Anti-Form'

In the trailer we see the tall knight's face. Normally, he has blue eyes, however, as he stares at the old guy they turn yellow, like the eyes of a Heartless. This makes some fans believe that the knight and Sora went through similar processes (becoming a heartless, reintegrating with your nobody) – if that is in fact where Anti-Form comes from anyway.

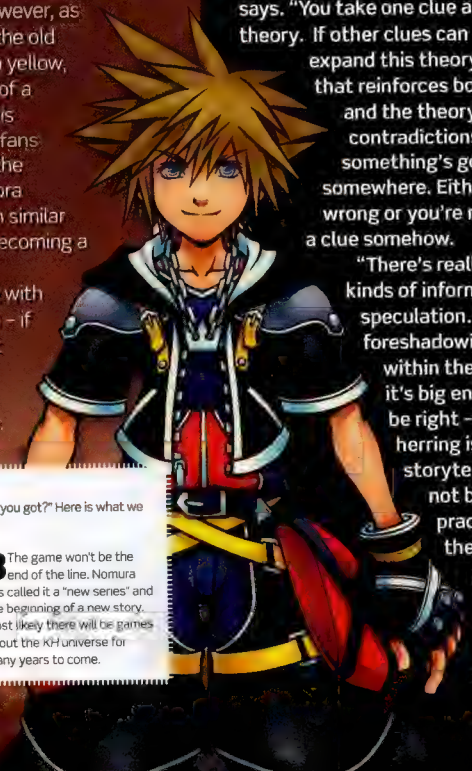
"Our trailer probably gives away the sequel"

reveals *Haze* script writer Rob Yescombe

The first *Haze* trailer was very carefully constructed. We've undergone some visual design changes since it was made, but the hidden content is all still in there. In fact, it probably gives even more away about the sequel than this one."

Simply the guessed Guesses have been made about *Haze*, but we still don't know what's fact.

"There have been some good guesses about the content, as well as some wildly inaccurate ones – genetic mutation, ghosts, and psychic powers for example. However, the real substance of *Haze* is in the themes it discusses, and we're already talking openly about those."



The Games Speculator's conclusions

As Cinderella's fairy godmother once said "Put it together and what have you got?" Here is what we have thus far, after putting all of the evidence together.

1 The main characters will probably be different in the next game. Since the game will most likely not be titled *Kingdom Hearts 3* then it's also likely that it won't be Sora's story.

2 The plot will probably have something to do with Xehanort's history. The knight mentions him, and thus far its one of the only things that that hasn't been explained in any way.

3 The game won't be the end of the line. Nomura has called it a "new series" and the beginning of a new story. Most likely there will be games about the *KH* universe for many years to come.

significance many of these theories simply crumbled into conjecture.

Clue and whose army?

"You have to check each piece of information against all others," Bauer says. "You take one clue and guess a theory. If other clues can fit into or expand this theory, it's good – that reinforces both those clues and the theory itself. If contradictions arise, something's gone wrong somewhere. Either the theory is wrong or you're misinterpreting a clue somehow.

"There's really two different kinds of information speculation. One is foreshadowing and hints within the game itself. If it's big enough, it has to be right – too big a red herring is just bad storytelling – but it may not be helpful, in a practical sense. At the end of *KH2*, the gang gets a letter with King Mickey's seal on it. The letter must be important, but until we know what it says all we can learn is that Sora, Riku and Kairi will be involved in the next game. Big surprise. The other is what the developer says in interviews. He's answering a direct question, which means we're presumably learning something we want to know. But he can refuse to answer, or even lie. Nomura said there wouldn't be a *KH2 Final Mix* [a Japan-only two-disc set, with extra content, bosses and so on]. That wasn't true. So when he says that the Enigmatic Soldier, (who looks like Xehanort with a brown dye job) is a new character, we have to wonder if that's true."

So what is game speculation? It's part science, part guesswork, and mostly all pattern recognition. Speculators need to be journalists, interviewing developers and writers to get the inside scoop on plot and game design. Speculators need to be detectives, searching out tiny hints dropped in random scenes, and picking apart pieces of dialogue to find their inner meaning. Most of all, speculators need to *not* be raving fanatics. Everyone can state an opinion about the future. Sure it would be great if there was a *Kingdom Hearts* level based around your favourite Disney movie, but is there any chance of it ever happening? Speculation is an art based on evidence, not opinion, and that is what separates theory from opinion.

Playing PlayStation Longer Harder Deeper

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Delving into a galaxy of Star Wars gaming. Eyes right, people.

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Capcom's gladiatorial genius broken apart.

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Get your sword ready, there's monsters to slay.

SECRETS

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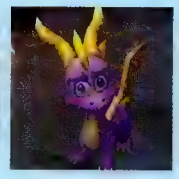
How to make the most spectacular of crashes.

SECRETS



96 PlayStation's most little-known secrets exposed.
Spyro brings a touch of Hollywood to PS2.

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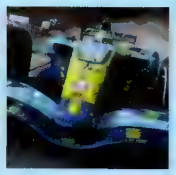

96 Taking pole position in *F1* online
Why a game that's only so-so on your own is brilliant on the net.

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98 Why *FlatOut 2* is the most destructive racer of them all
Destroying entire tracks makes for classic fun.

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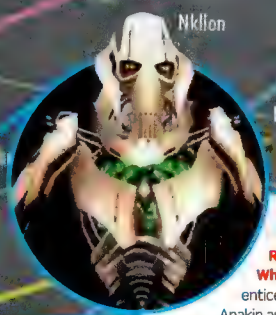
102 A gratuitous picture of lots of ladies
All the women who have ever played Lara Croft, together at last...

PLAYSTATION CELEBRATION

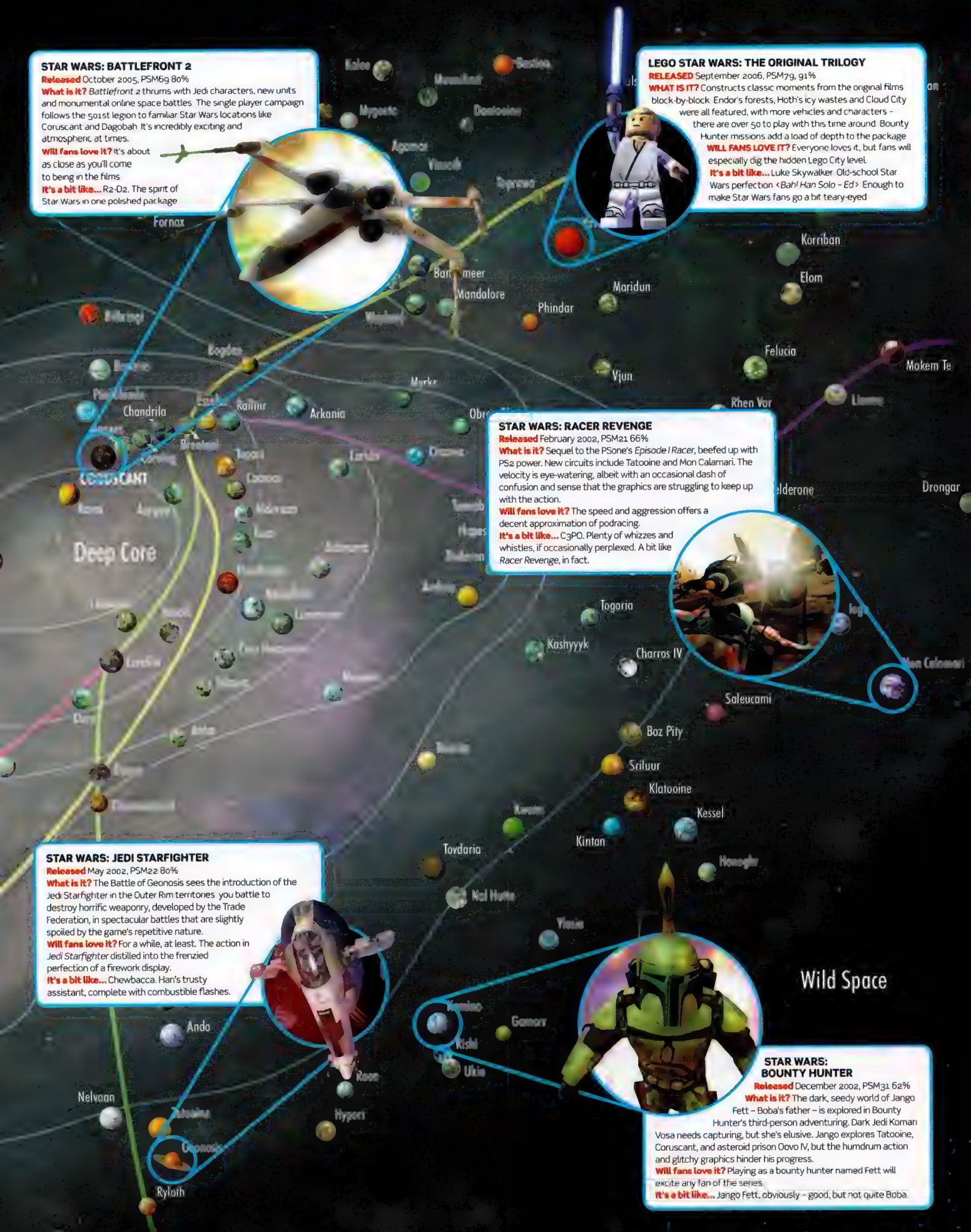
How Star Wars uses the Force

There are more Star Wars games than stars in the galaxy. There's, er, less than a dozen stars, right? Anyway, some have been rubbish, some great, but we rarely cease to be excited when a new Lucasarts game is on the horizon. Here, as we wait impatiently for *Star Wars: Force Unleashed* to come to PS3, we take a look at some of the highlights and lowlights of gaming's interpretations of the Greatest Films Ever. Got your lightsaber ready? We're going in...

STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING
Released April 2001, PSM11 45%
What is it? Aimed at younger fans, *Super Bombad Racing* took a light-hearted approach. Reminiscent of *Mario Kart*, it featured rollercoaster circuits from Endor to Carkhoon, and 'humorous' oversized heads, but the simplistic gameplay meant there was little fun for people over the age of 10.
Will fans love it? It is quite funny. For a couple of minutes. They probably won't, though.
It's a bit like... Jar Jar Binks – 'Comedy' character with all the humour of an abscess.



STAR WARS EPISODE III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
Released May 2005, PSM63 48%
What is it? Released before the film, *Revenge* enticed eager fans with movie footage and followed Anakin and Obi-Wan – complete with simplistic lightsabers and underdeveloped force powers – on their travels to good-looking but glitch-ridden planets like Utapau and Mustafar.
Will fans love it? If you're a Star Wars completist, it's for you. If you don't like games revolving around rubbish brawling, you won't.
It's a bit like... Wicket. Fluffy and cute he may be, but he's not much good at anything. At all.



STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT 2

Released October 2005, PSM69 80%

What is it? *Battlefront 2* thrums with Jedi characters, new units and monumental online space battles. The single player campaign follows the 501st legion to familiar Star Wars locations like Coruscant and Dagobah. It's incredibly exciting and atmospheric at times.

Will fans love it? It's about as close as you'll come to being in the films.

It's a bit like... R2-D2. The spirit of Star Wars in one polished package.

LEGO STAR WARS: THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

RELEASED September 2006, PSM79, 91%

WHAT IS IT? Constructs classic moments from the original films block-by-block. Endor's forests, Hoth's icy wastes and Cloud City were all featured, with more vehicles and characters – there are over 50 to play with this time around. Bounty Hunter missions add a load of depth to the package.

WILL FANS LOVE IT? Everyone loves it, but fans will especially dig the hidden Lego City level.

It's a bit like... Luke Skywalker. Old-school Star Wars perfection <*Bah! Han Solo – Ed*> Enough to make Star Wars fans go a bit teary-eyed.

STAR WARS: RACER REVENGE

Released February 2002, PSM21 66%

What is it? Sequel to the PSone's *Episode I Racer*, beefed up with PS2 power. New circuits include Tatooine and Mon Calamari. The velocity is eye-watering, albeit with an occasional dash of confusion and sense that the graphics are struggling to keep up with the action.

Will fans love it? The speed and aggression offers a decent approximation of podracing.

It's a bit like... C3PO. Plenty of whizzes and whistles, if occasionally perplexed. A bit like *Racer Revenge*, in fact.

STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER

Released May 2002, PSM22 80%

What is it? The Battle of Geonosis sees the introduction of the Jedi Starfighter in the Outer Rim territories you battle to destroy horrific weaponry, developed by the Trade Federation, in spectacular battles that are slightly spoiled by the game's repetitive nature.

Will fans love it? For a while, at least. The action in *Jedi Starfighter* distilled into the frenzied perfection of a firework display.

It's a bit like... Chewbacca. Han's trusty assistant, complete with combustible flashes.

STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER

Released December 2002, PSM31 62%

What is it? The dark, seedy world of Jango Fett – Boba's father – is explored in Bounty Hunter's third-person adventuring. Dark Jedi Komari Vosa needs capturing, but she's elusive. Jango explores Tatooine, Coruscant, and asteroid prison Oovo IV, but the humdrum action and glitchy graphics hinder his progress.

Will fans love it? Playing as a bounty hunter named Fett will excite any fan of the series.

It's a bit like... Jango Fett, obviously – good, but not quite Boba.

Pub Capcom
Dev Capcom
FYI PS2 | 2005 | PSM58 85%
Follow the story of the mighty Agrippa as he battles to save his father from execution after he's alleged to have killed Caesar. Expect plenty of gore.

PLAYSTATION GENIUS

10 reasons why Shadow Of Rome should be hailed

Nathan Irvine

Close shunt The bad guys don't care about each other, and they'll smash each other just to reach you.

Roping in Using your whip you can pull your foe toward you so that you can rearrange his face up-close.

Slashing out There's nothing more satisfying than feeling the pad rumble as you slice a head clean off.

Mixed war Clear out the opposition and complete the race for rapturous applause from the crowd.

1 CHARIOT RACES

About halfway through the game, the gladiatorial action takes a sudden change of pace as you race deadly chariots. It's hard enough navigating the course at high-speed but with a couple of bloodthirsty opponents swinging axes dangerously close to your head, it becomes insane. It isn't long before you're snatching a weapon from a goon, however, and chopping off heads all around as you indulge in a very Roman form of road rage. You can also side-swipe your fellow racers to let them know that you mean business and, sometimes, they'll slip from their chariot and under the wheels in a shower of blood.

GameAmmo

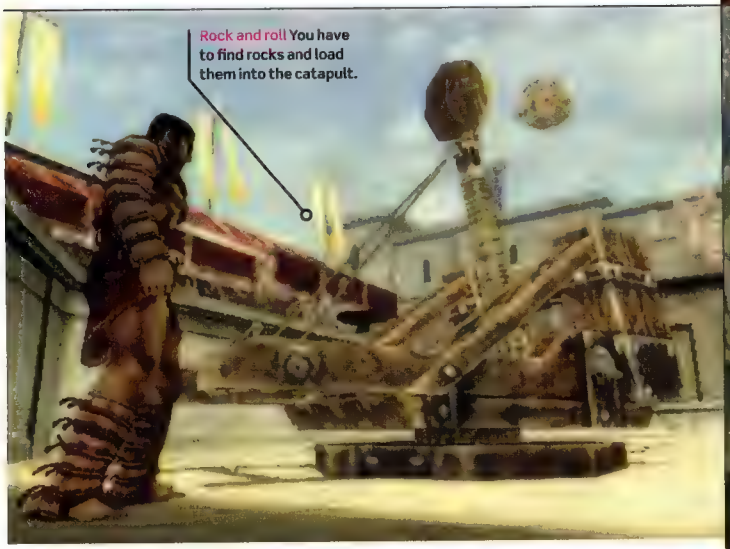
"Finish the game once and you'll unlock a gorilla suit for Agrippa."

3 FIGHTING THE ANIMALS

Even the most cold-blooded of murderers gets bored of butchering the same species over and over again. RSPCA workers won't like it, but there are a few animals to carve up too. There are wolves and elephants to slice up, but best of all you'll get to go toe-to-paw with a huge tiger in an arena. The vicious big cat will do what tigers do and try and rip out your guts. They're wily foes, but you'll soon have them dead and be feline fine.

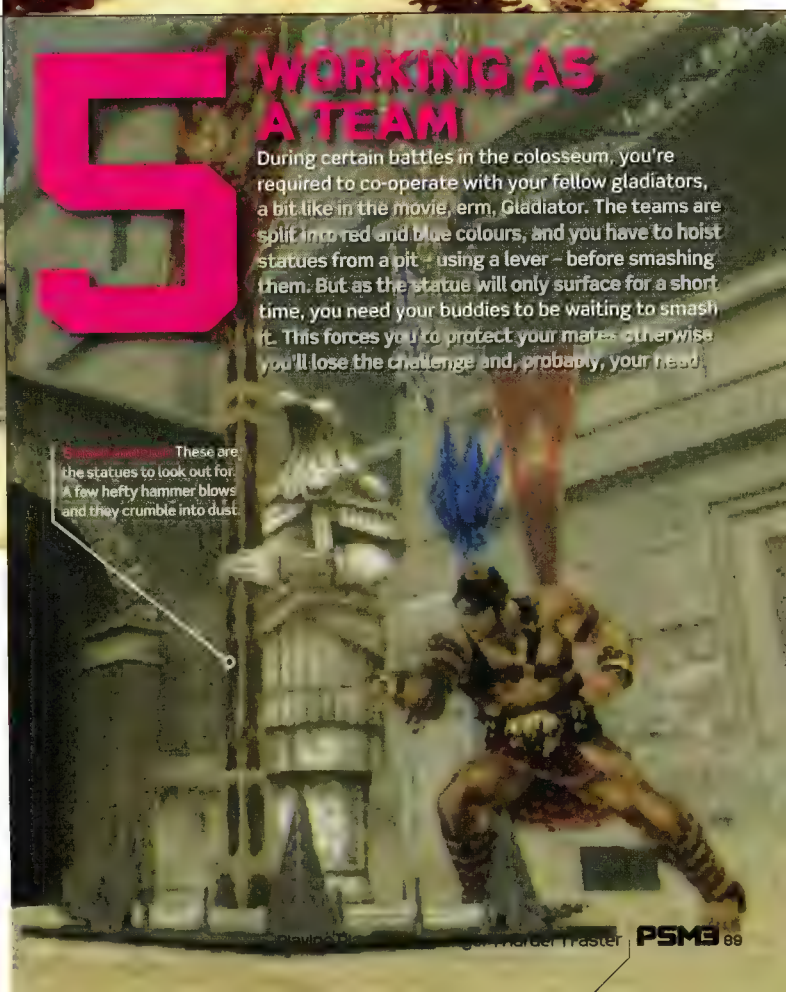
2 COVER YOURSELF IN ARMOUR

OK, 99.9% of *Shadow Of Rome* is about the killing – apart from the turgid Octavianus sneaking bits – but you need to protect yourself. Felling a bloke in armour means you can wrestle it from his corpse and wear it to defend yourself against attacks. So you can wear different helmets, carry shields or even don a dashing chest plate – vital for the Roman murderer who likes to look stylish while stabbing men in the bowels.



5 WORKING AS A TEAM

During certain battles in the colosseum, you're required to co-operate with your fellow gladiators, a bit like in the movie, erm, Gladiator. The teams are split into red and blue colours, and you have to hoist statues from a pit – using a lever – before smashing them. But as the statue will only surface for a short time, you need your buddies to be waiting to smash it. This forces you to protect your mates, otherwise you'll lose the challenge and, probably, your head.



4 UNLEASH THE CATAPULTS

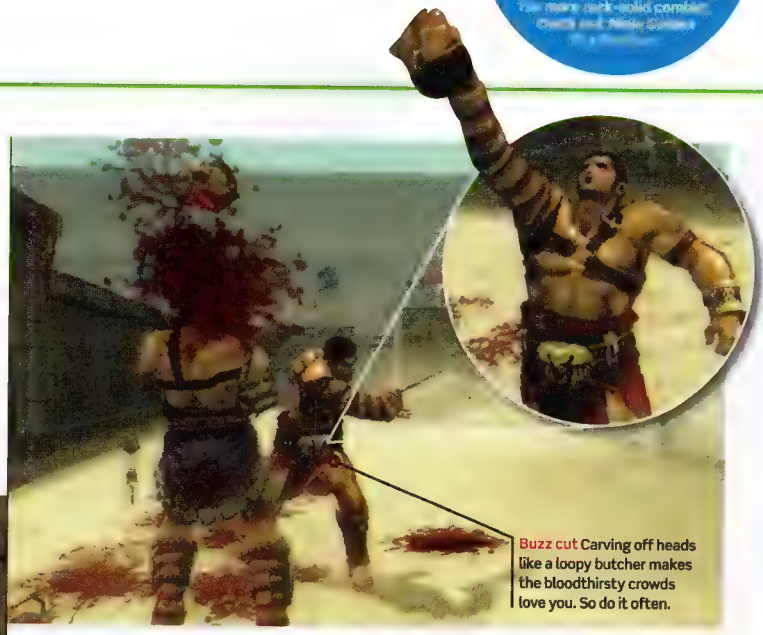
You'll find these huge contraptions dotted about the place. The single-shot catapults are a nightmare to load and fire but, when you do, the effects are devastating. They can knock opponents from their higher ground, take out large groups of gladiators and they can even be used as a slightly unsubtle means to open locked doors. Just don't mess about with them when you're being rushed by men.

ON THE DISC

6 EAT TO LIVE, LIVE TO EAT

When you've taken one too many batterings at the hands of rival gladiators, you're forced to eat something to regain your stamina. Agrippa will eat anything lying around, from chicken legs and entire wheels of cheese to bits of old fruit thrown at him by the braying crowds. Strike a victory pose after a victory in the arena and they'll chuck you nicer stuff to help defeat your fatigue. Bless 'em.

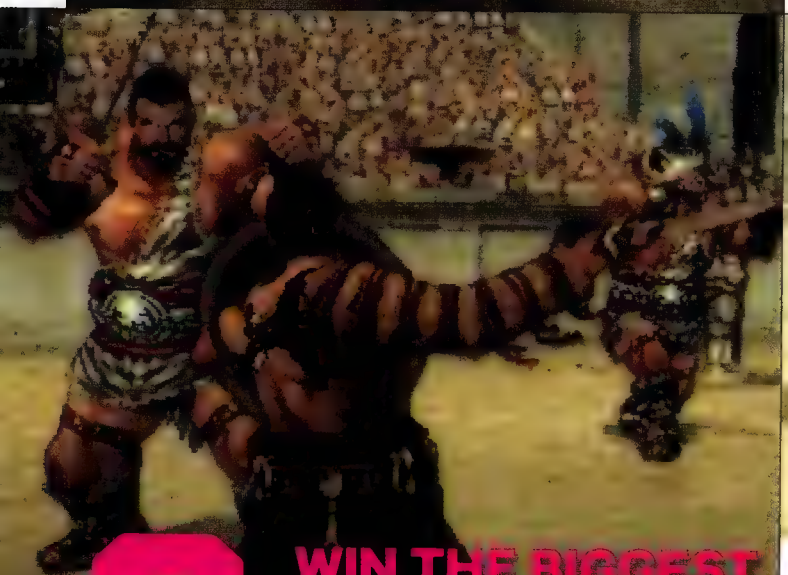
Meat and greet Be careful you don't get clanged with a mace while you're eating. It'll hurt a lot.



Buzz cut Carving off heads like a loopy butcher makes the bloodthirsty crowds love you. So do it often.

7 LOP OFF HEADS

Rome's violence is unflinchingly brutal, if hugely comical. Our favourite (and sickest) display of dismemberment is lopping off an enemy's bonce. Strike with a powerful attack and, with one swift swipe, his swede will pop off like a fleshy cork. And the raw carnage doesn't end there. You can actually pick up their still warm head and hold it aloft like a victory trophy, riling up the crowds and making them love your madness. If you feel like it, you can even use the head as a macabre melee weapon. Urgh.



8 WIN THE BIGGEST RUCK EVER

This battle royale is one of the game's highlights. It's an enormous fight to the death on a huge scale with the game's biggest, nastiest, meanest characters. Previous arena battles end after killing just a few gladiators, but this goes on and on and on, testing your endurance skills. Best keep your eye out for those energy-giving cheese wheels...

Armless Enemies fall to their knees when defeated. Finish 'em.

Blades of glory Special weapons like this curved sword make dismembering people a simple, horrid task.

9 MERCY KILLINGS

When an enemy's had too much suffering – usually the loss of his arms is when he breaks, as you would – he'll fall to his knees and quiver. Sometimes they even pee themselves, which is disturbing, frankly. Anyway, to put these sorry sods out of their misery, hold down the heavy attack button and end their pitiful lives with a well-placed swipe of Agrippa's sword. Hey, it's for the best.

GameAmmo

"Shadow Of Rome uses an optimised version of the Onimusha 3 engine."

10 CAUSE BLOODY MAYHEM

It's remarkable that *Rome* wasn't picked up on by the Daily Mail. It's one of the goriest games we've ever played, and it's relentless. If it wasn't for the Octavius stealth sections in between the arena bits, we'd have probably been psychologically scarred by all the dismemberment, slicing, stabbing, chopping, cutting and beating people with their own severed limbs. *Rome* ain't for the squeamish, that's for sure.

Hammer time These huge mallets are tough to use, but the fountainous blood effect on impact is worth it.

Falling down Even when they're lying down foes can be attacked gruesomely – like this unfortunate chap

Steal, drop, roll Knock a weapon from an enemy's hand and he'll be left defenceless. Gut him.

The ones we didn't pick...

Bananarama
The stealth bits in Ninja Gaiden look like Octavius were like a mix [illegible] on their arses [illegible]

The salvo list
Did you'd arena [illegible] special moves [illegible] power up into [illegible] even a [illegible]

EMAIL PSM3 @
Disagree with our choice? Then send us your picks
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

ON THE DISC
See the 'Making of' *Elder Scrolls* on Side A of the disc

PLAYSTATION EXPLOITS

See the finest beasts that roam the lands in Oblivion

Leon Hurley

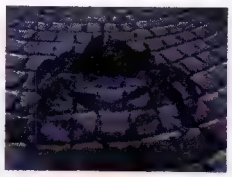
EMAIL PSM3 @
Want a game exploded in ludicrous detail? Tell us: psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Pub Ubisoft
Dev Bethesda Softworks
FYI PS3 | 2007 | PSM88 93%
One of the most epic games ever created. There's no fixed structure or path, you're free to wander a massive fantasy world picking up quests as you see fit. Add together all the story missions and side quests and there are well over 200+ hours of adventuring to discover.

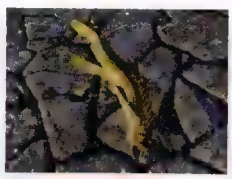
MONSTER CLUB 25 creatures to find and kill

Nature's a beautiful thing. And *Oblivion*'s full of it: the rat's trembling whiskers as he leaps at your face, the mighty ogre's strength as he pounds you to dust... hang on, nature's horrible. Meet the beasts that'll make your life a misery.

Kill... Rats
These nasty little fellas will be the first creature you encounter. Their attacks – scampering around your ankles one minute, jumping at your throat the next – are more infuriating than dangerous.



Kill... Mud crabs
Found near water, the only real threat from them is catching Swamp Fever which drains your strength. They're one of the few things you can one-shot, though, which makes you feel well hard.



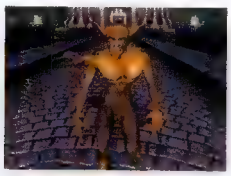
Kill... Slaughterfish
A cross between an eel and a blender, this is the only foe found underwater. Tricky to dispatch because only melee attacks work in the drink, plus there's always the danger of drowning.

Kill... Mountain lions
Beautiful, majestic creatures that hang around higher altitudes in a foul mood. Fast and deadly. In Fort Caractacus, the home of an experimental conjurer, you'll find an invisible one. Well, it'll find you...

Kill... Sheep
Not all that much of a threat, but they do follow you around sometimes. If you get a lion or wolf chasing you, you can head to the nearest farm and use them as a fluffy distraction.

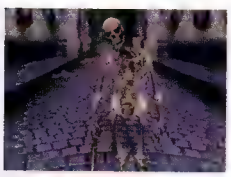
Kill... Bears
Nothing loosens the bowels like 300lb of angry bear rearing up in front of you as you're strolling through the forest. They're not very fast, though, giving an agile warrior the advantage.

Kill... Imps
These winged scrotes are a pain because their small size makes them hard to spot in the wilderness. They attack with ranged spells and you'll often find them near abandoned forts and caves.



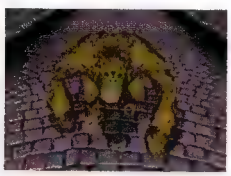
Kill... Scamps
Stinking, stupid, cowardly and generally grotty all round, scamps are actually lesser Daedra. Created by Daedric gods they're mainly interested in creating havoc and only a threat in large groups.

Kill... Goblins
Not the sharpest tools in the box, but include warriors with crude armour, shamans and powerful warlords. They have a far-reaching leaping attack which makes fighting them unpredictable.

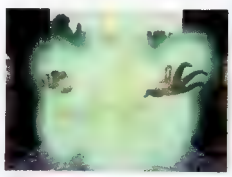


Kill... Skeletons
Found in the ruins and dungeons where they died. Can be tough to kill, what with being dead already. They wield swords or bows and Skeleton Champions summon a bony bodyguard.

Kill... Zombies
Basically a big, walking disease, they carry many infections and are formidable enemies. The Dread Zombie in particular regenerates health faster than you can hurt it. You'll need strong magic.

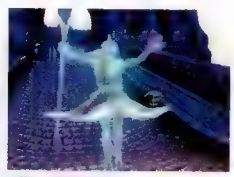


Kill...Trolls
Surprisingly fast, with lethal hammering fists, these creatures are best fought by climbing something and battering from above. They do have a huge weakness to fire which can be exploited.

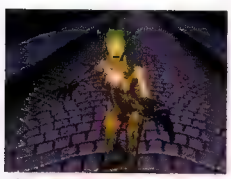


Kill... Ghosts
Even the weakest spectres are immune to conventional attacks. You'll need magic or silver weapons to hurt them. And in one mission, the spirit of a victim you vanquish comes back for revenge.

Kill... Minotaurs
Those huge horns mean these guys don't need weapons. They still carry them, though – usually massive axes or hammers – to complement a headbutt attack. Minotaur Lords are even scarier.



Kill... Liches
Necromancers who've transformed themselves into undead creatures, they use a lot of spells and resist many magical attacks. They also summon other undead to fight for them.



Kill... Spriggans
The sexiest trees you'll meet, Spriggans live mostly in forests and don't like their habitat being disturbed. They'll summon bears to help out as they stab you with their fingers – all with a girlish giggle.

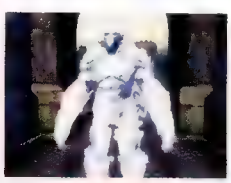
Kill... Wraiths
You'll hear their tomb-dry breathing before you see these sprits. Their screeching attack cry isn't much nicer. Every Wraith has a special curse, such as draining strength or magical power.

Kill... Clannfears
These small, dinosaur-ish Daedra beasts can jump huge distances, giving them an incredible attack range and that boney head can inflict huge damage. Avoid groups of them completely.

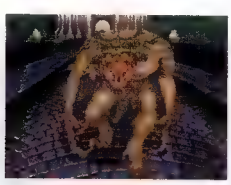
Kill... Land Dreugh
Part crab, part psychopath, these demonic crustaceans live near wet areas. Despite their humanoid torso they're wild animals that scuttle into attack quickly with shock magic.

Kill... Ogres
Large, solitary chaps, found wandering hills and mountains. Essentially very dumb – so stupid, in fact, their teeth can be used to make a poison that damages a victim's intelligence.

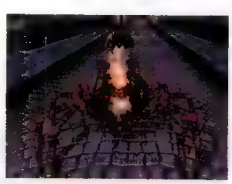
Kill... Flame Atronachs
These elementals are often found in the flaming, hell-like dimension of Oblivion. They prefer to hurl fireballs but are agile melee fighters when cornered. Attack with frost magic; cold is their weakness.



Kill... Frost Atronachs
The *polar* (geddit?) opposite of the Flame Atronach, these entities are made of ice. They can heal themselves so rapid and sustained attacks are required to defeat them, preferably fire-based.



Kill... Daedroths
A form of Daedra most often found patrolling around Oblivion gates. Their most noticeable characteristic is an odd head shake, performed just before fighting as they cast a shield spell.



Kill... Spider Daedra
These powerful lasses use lightning magic plus poisonous spit that drains health. They can heal their wounds and create little spiderlings that rush in to attack with a paralysing bite.

Kill... Xivilai
One of the highest-level Daedra. They have a huge range of spells but also use weapons: usually two-handed axes or hammers. Worst of all, they usually summon a Clannfear during battle.

Cyrodiil FAQ

Q Why can't I find a certain creature, item or quest?
A Oblivion generates everything [illegible]

Q Can you actually finish the game?
A Technically [illegible]

MINGLE The most interesting people

One of the best things in *Oblivion* is the sheer number of people you'll meet on your travels. Most are just getting on with their lives and minding their own business. But some have stories to tell.

Say hello to... The Gray Fox
The head of the Thieves' Guild wears the Cowl Of Nocturnal. It erases their identity, making them The Gray Fox instead.

Say hello to... The Gray Prince
Agronak gro-Malog is the Grand Champion of the gladiatorial arena. He believes he's of noble birth, but is he?

Say hello to... The Forlorn Watchman
The ghost of Grantham Blakely, a sailor, stares mournfully out to sea every night. It's up to you to help him find peace.

Say hello to... Glarthir
This paranoid elf lives in Skingrad and thinks everyone is after him. He asks you for help, but what'll happen if you don't believe his conspiracy theories?

Say hello to... Janus Hassildor
The Count of Skingrad has a very sick wife. She's been in a coma for 50 years, in fact. Maybe you can help...

PAINKILLER The best weapons

Shortsword Of The Inferno
Rummage around enough and you'll find this Daedric weapon. As well as a keen cutting edge, it dishes out fire damage.

Warhammer Of Putrification
This unpleasant hammer is great at whacking the bejesus out of a victim. It magically disintegrates their armour, too.

Dagger Of Paralysis
Unless you make your own enchanted weapon, paralysing blades are rare. The benefits are obvious, though.

Warhammer Of Storms
Inflicts masses of shock damage with every blow. For your victim, it's like being walloped with a golb, fully-charged battery.

KAZAM The best magic staffs

Sanguine Rose
This is a gift from the Daedric god Sanguine and is in the shape of a wooden rose. It summons a monster to fight for you.

Skull Of Corruption
Creates an exact copy of your enemy that will then fight the original on your behalf. Be warned: others can use it against you.

Staff Of Worms
Defeat the leader of the necromancers, Mannimarco, and take his staff. It reanimates the dead for a short while to fight for you.

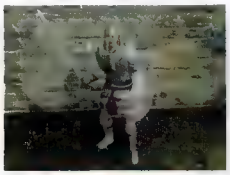
Wabbajack
Transforms any creature into something else. Great if you turn a Minotaur into a rat, disastrous if you turn a sheep into an ogre.

SHINY The best armour

Your armour says a lot about you, "I don't want to be hurt," being the most obvious statement. It comes in 'Heavy' or 'Light' varieties, which have different effects on mobility and protection.

Wear Fur Armour
Offers limited protection but does allow the user to stay light on his feet. Favoured by bandits and hunters, it's not much use against any serious threats.

Wear Iron Armour
Worn by warriors and Battlemages, this metal plate is cumbersome. With enough experience, though, it's possible to become quite agile despite the weight.

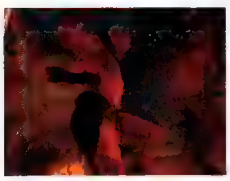


Wear Mithril Armour
Wearing this says "nobility", "valour" and "I was up all night polishing this." You'll need experience to use it but the combination of lightness and protection are worth it.

Wear Glass Armour
The strongest light armour, this can only be worn at level 20 or above. It's made from volcanic glass and glows. The jury's still out on whether it's a bit Elton John.

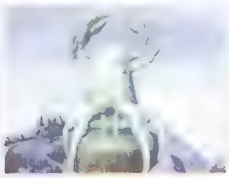
Wear Daedric Armour
Wearing this makes it clear you're a mean mofo. Bulky but extremely protective, this armour is nearly always enchanted in some way.

WORSHIP The best Daedric gods



You only ever see one god in person, Mehrunes Dagon (pictured). The rest of the time you'll make offerings at shrines to receive quests. These missions are worth doing – here's why...

Pray for... Azura
One of the few Daedric princes to appear in a female form, he asks you to find followers who've become vampires and 'save' them. Permanently.



Pray for... Hermaeus Mora
A potato/lobster hybrid, Hermaeus is the god of knowledge and memory. He offers a powerful boost to your abilities if you kill one of every race in Cyrodiil.

Pray for... Nocturnal
The god of night and darkness. His eye has been stolen. Find the thieves, get it back and you'll be get the Skeleton Key, a lockpick that lets you open any door.

Pray for... Peryite
Lord of pestilence. Peryite's followers messed up a summoning and are stuck in the plane of Oblivion. Save them and you'll get a shield that reflects magic.

Pray for...Sanguine
Sanguine wants you to crash a royal dinner party and use a spell that makes everybody naked. Well, he is the Daedric lord of depravity.

ON THE DISC
Try our MotorStorm demo out for size

PLAYSTATION SECRETS

Smashing a car into a million tiny pieces in MotorStorm

Crash and burn
Because of *MotorStorm*'s exceptional physics, crashing can be just as much fun as racing. It also lets you see just how detailed the car models are, and how they're made up of thousands of pieces which disconnect in real-time after every brutal smash. You'll have a battered, shattered metal corpse. It's a shame this causes so much problems in laggy online games, though. It's not rare to see bits of car appear out of nowhere, or disappear altogether.

"A battered, shattered metal corpse"

1 The angle

Smash and grab To create a perfect crash, you need to get the angle just right. If you see a piece of rock jutting out, try and nick it with the corner of your bumper. This will send your car into a violent, whirling spin and cause the maximum amount of damage

2 The approach

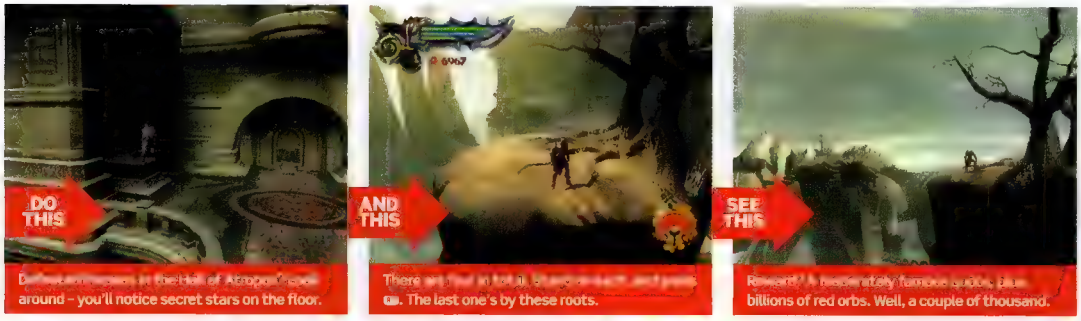
Crash test dummy But it's not only the angle of your crash you have to consider – the approach is just as important. Rather than simply drive into an obstacle, try and hit a ramp. The momentum of you hurtling through the air will increase the smash factor tenfold

3 The result

Debris Moore To view your crash in incredible detail, pause the game and use the right analogue stick to twirl the camera around. See if you can cause as much debris as we have here. Crashing is an art in *MotorStorm*. Record your best and send them to us.

PlayStation's best kept secrets uncovered every month

Hidden bit › **God of War II** › Secret message

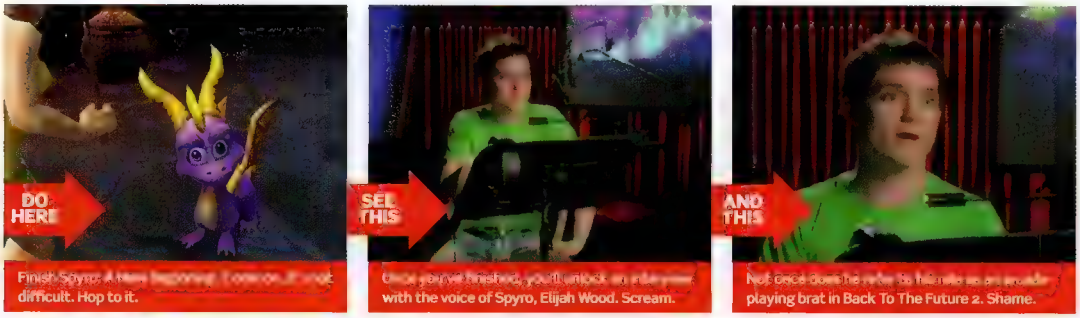


Different weapons in the Hall of Atropos reveal around – you'll notice secret stars on the floor.

There are five in total. Shoot each and press ⓡ3. The last one's by these roots.

Present? A heavily armed grizzly, plus billions of red orbs. Well, a couple of thousand.

Interview › **Spyro: A New Beginning** › Elijah Wood speaks

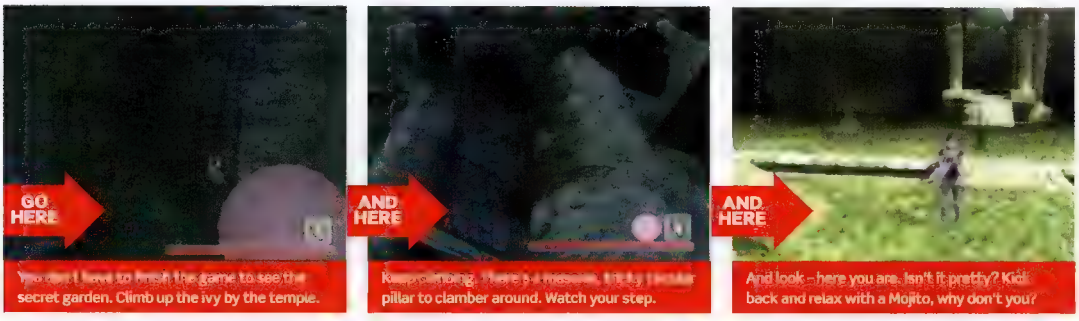


Finish Spyro: A New Beginning. It can be quite difficult. Hop to it.

Once you've finished, you'll unlock an extra game with the voice of Spyro, Elijah Wood. Scream.

Not once does he refer to himself as the arrogant playing brat in Back To The Future 2. Shame.

Secret garden › **Shadow Of The Colossus** › Get there the 'easy' way



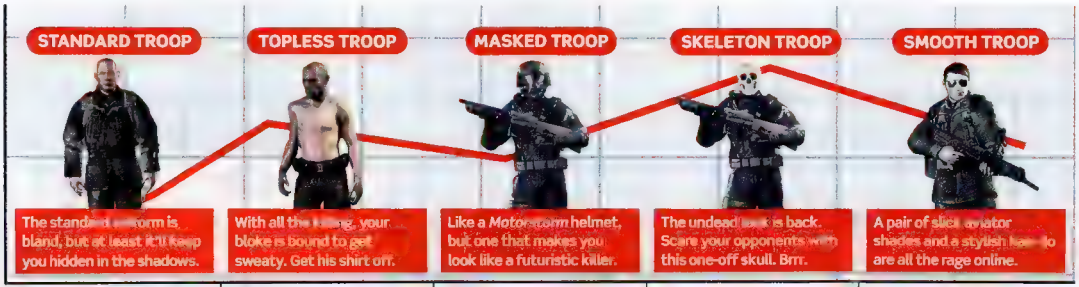
You don't have to finish the game to see the secret garden. Climb up the ivy by the temple.

Keep going. There are massive, tricky pillar to clamber around. Watch your step.

And look – here you are. Isn't it pretty? Kick back and relax with a Mojito, why don't you?

From zero to hero in... Resistance

Pimp your online soldier with a selection of different outfits – set yourself apart from the rest


STANDARD TROOP
TOPLESS TROOP
MASKED TROOP
SKELETON TROOP
SMOOTH TROOP
The standard uniform is bland, but at least it'll keep you hidden in the shadows.
With all the killing, your bloke is bound to get sweaty. Get his shirt off.
Like a *MotorStorm* helmet, but one that makes you look like a futuristic killer.
The undead look is back. Scare your opponents with this one-off skull. Brrr.
A pair of slick aviator shades and a stylish hood are all the rage online.
Mental
Game Start
Game End

The Top 5

Cheats you *must* know

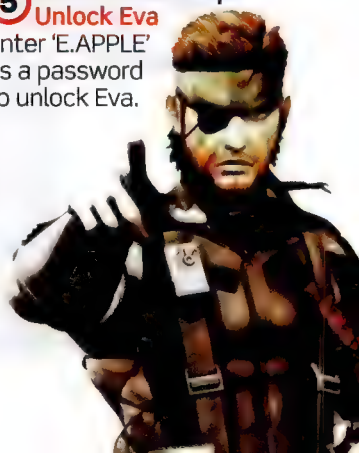
1 F.E.A.R.
Level select
Enter 'F3ARDAY1' as a profile name to unlock all levels. Achievements are disabled if you use this profile name, mind

2 The Warriors PSP
All weapon dealers unlocked
While playing the game, press ←, R1, ◎, ⊗, SELECT, ▣.

3 Tiger Woods 07
Unlock all of the Nike items
Enter 'JUSTDOIT' as a password to unlock all of the Nike items.

4 MotorStorm
Big Head mode
Pause the game and hold L1, L2, L3, R1, R2, R3, ← and, on the right stick, →. Look at the comedy oversized craniums. We wept with laughter. Sort of.

5 MGS: Portable Ops
Unlock Eva
Enter 'E.APPLE' as a password to unlock Eva.



ON THE DISC
For a different kind of driving, check out *Burnout Paradise*

Take the chequered flag in Formula One online

Mike Channell

Pub Sony
Dev Studio Liverpool
FYI PS3 | 2007 | PSM86 50%
Wipeout creators and F1 veterans Studio Liverpool open their PlayStation 3 account with a simulation of the 2006 Formula One World Championship. Somewhat disappointingly executed, but all the teams and circuits are present and correct

Lewis Hamilton is currently shaking up the stuffy world of F1 in his debut season with driving that verges on witchcraft. Of course, the only place we can bash motors the way he does is in *Formula One Championship Edition*, and if you want to challenge the best virtual wheelmen, you'll have to head online. In F1 you can dice at 200mph with up to nine other petrolheads, with your PS3 filling up the rest of the grid with AI ghost cars.

Lost voice

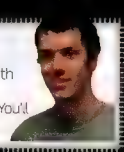
While we don't have any major problems with the online mode, there are a couple of rogue sugar cubes in the proverbial petrol tank. First, the lack of voice communication can be wearing in longer races, especially if you're off the pace and at the back on your own. Secondly, whenever a new player joins, the game has a tendency to glitch as the newcomer's PlayStation 3 synchronises with the session in progress. Neither of these problems is a dealbreaker, though, and we love the fact you can dive in mid-race and assume control of one of the AI drivers – a feature that should become a template for all online racers to follow.

There are some great drivers on *Formula One Championship Edition*'s online servers, but you shouldn't feel intimidated as you can carry any driver aids you feel like across to multi-player matches. You'll want to make sure braking assistance is switched off, mind – the assist throws the anchors out so early that you'll be woefully off the pace before you've even got going. Whatever aids you employ, though, only hours of practice will allow you to compete with the best.

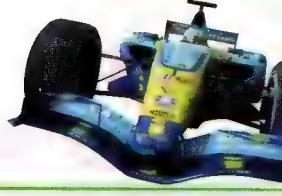
If you're a fan of racing games, whether you know the first thing about formula one or not, the chance to race against nine other like-minded leadfoots should be grabbed with both driving gloves, despite the niggly flaws. With car damage and pit stops enabled, it realistically mirrors what you see on your telly on Sunday afternoons. We'll see you on the starting grid.

ONLINE VERDICT

Lots of players? Usually rammed with players from all over Europe
Buy it just for online? A fan of F1? You'll squeeze months of play out of this

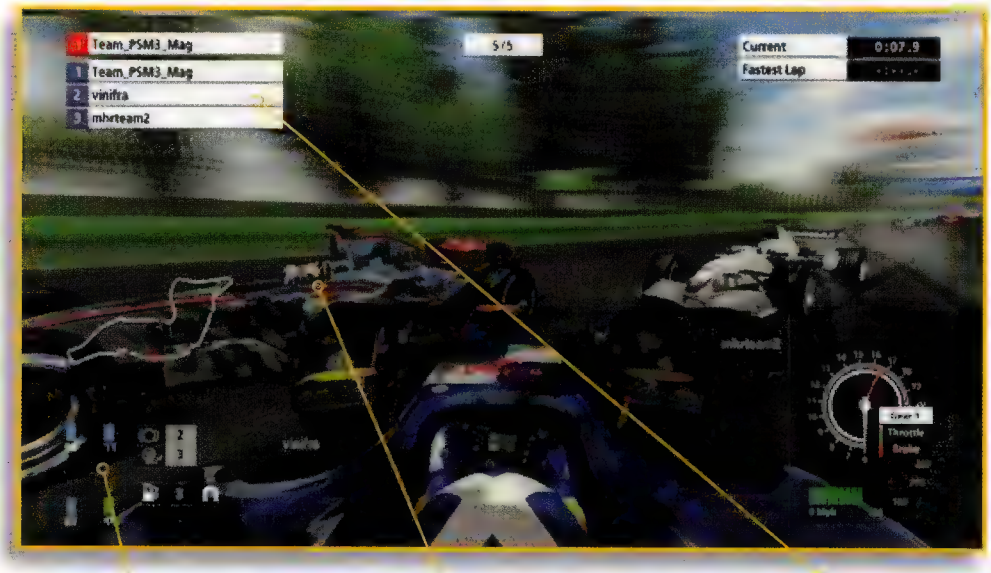


"This is the first F1 game to get released in America since 2003"



GAMEPLAY Defining moment

The sense of speed in *F1* is enormous, which makes battling with other players online all the more thrilling. Fortunately, the HUD is generally clear enough to require little more than the odd glance.



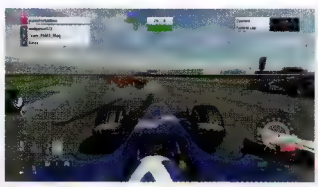
Damaged goods
This panel shows your damage and tyre wear if it's switched on. Don't forget to hit SELECT to request a pit stop if you've bent your shiny new car.

Neck and neck
All cars are made equal online, so it doesn't really matter if you're in the cockpit of a Ferrari or a Super Aguri, you can still chase the victory.

Pick up front
Race positions are shown here. Names with AI before them are ghost cars controlled by your PlayStation 3, so they won't ruin your hot lap times.

SKILLS Online tactics

Not everyone is an formula one driver with the brain of a supercomputer and reactions faster than nuclear fission, so here are some things to keep an eye on in your career as a racing hero. Follow our tips and you should find yourself more like Michael Schumacher than Christian Albers.



1 The pace to race

Qualifying, or 'quali' as the drivers call it, takes the form of five minutes sprinting before the race. No sponsor-pleasing hour-long sessions, just three or four chances to make the best impression you can. The fastest players will be placed further up the grid, giving them an advantage on the surge down to the first corner. Don't worry if you're at the back though, you can always pick your way through the debris at the end of the chaotic first lap and come away with a good result.

2 Start on the right foot

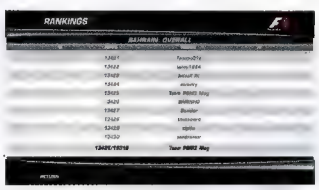
Sitting on the grid, your immediate problem is not getting a clean getaway, but working out how to deal with the inevitable pile-up at the first corner. You'll either be faced with people who brake where they usually would on a hot lap, causing a few splintered front wings, or the type who is so keen to pass the guy ahead of him that he forgets to brake at all, T-boning his unlucky victim. Remember, you can't win the race in the first corner, but you can certainly lose it.

3 It's the pits

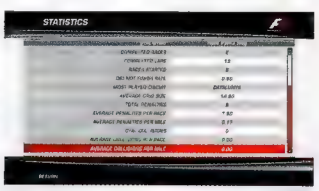
There's nothing that will cock up a race more than running out of fuel. In *F1*, you'll get a stay of execution if you're out of juice, though the punitive respawn will cost you time and you'll still have to pit. Hit SELECT to request your pit stop, then make sure you hit the buttons in the right sequence in the Bemani-based pit stop minigame so you don't haemorrhage vital seconds sitting in the stall. Get it sorted quicker than your opponents and you may even make up a place.

RANKS Lap by lap analysis

Head into the rankings screen and you can find out where your best and average laps stack up on every course, against friends or the public.



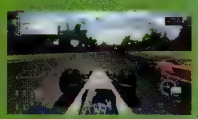
Your overall ranking is a combination of your best and average laps across the whole of your career, on every circuit on the calendar.



There's also a statistics screen that details interesting trivia – like your favourite circuits and how many miles you've travelled in total.

Online Highlights

1



2 ...hat? A short

3

4 We're worryingly close to the end of the race.

chasing Superpan is corrected, but we doubt

5

Harshest insult

"OMG u rammed me off dick"

Community service

Race more regularly

There are plenty of people organising season-long championships on the official forums if you're ready to commit. Find them all at http://tinyurl.com/3b4rxl, but only if you can bear 20 long laps on each of the 18 circuits in the game. Up for it?

ON THE DISC
FlatOut on PS3? We hope so, but nothing to see yet

PLAYSTATION CLASSIC

Why FlatOut 2 is a jelly party to Burnout's bar brawl

Steve Bailey

Pub Empire Interactive
Dev Bugbear
FYI PS2 | 2006 | PSM77 81%
Ructions and destruction galore in the most lunatic driving game available on PS2

No offence to *Burnout*. It's excellent in its own particular ways. But, well... it's all a bit *clean*. There are plenty of thrills, but no genuine spills; all the mess that pours out of each crash is soon reset, the cars flicked back onto the track as if nothing had ever happened. The carnage feels like choreography, a well-directed bar brawl full of cool camera angles and crunching sound effects, but one where no-one gets hurt. By contrast, *FlatOut 2* is like an impromptu food fight – dirty and far from glamorous, but a clash where no-one leaves without egg on their face and jelly in their pants.

FlatOut 2 is PS2's most authentic demolition derby, a racing game where making podium is as much a matter of survival as skill. Its tracks weave through a caricatured whistle-stop tour of the USA – races bolt through storm drains and canyons, past fields of corn, cross disused airfields and even barge through shopping centres and basketball courts. Although, given the stacks of lumber and piles of other props that litter the tracks, you'd be forgiven for thinking you were tearing through B&Q on a hillbilly trolley dash.

See, in most other driving games you've only got to worry about outperforming the competition. In *FlatOut 2*, the entire world's out to get you – hazardous crap is heaped on every corner, and hundreds of trackside objects are just begging to be sent clattering all over the road. All of this debris is permanent, and real – nothing vanishes, and everything gets strewn about the place as cars plough into (and through) the struts of scaffolding, piles of tires and chain-link fences. After just the first lap, the track's become a chaotic playground where the rules have completely changed. Your sweet little driving lines count for dick when a bundle of logs have cluttered up the apex.

EMAIL PSM3 @
What do you think of *FlatOut 2*? Let us know: psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Competent competitors

Drive sensibly in *FlatOut 2* and you'll certainly lose. But drive like a balls-on-fire maniac, and you'll find yourself upside down in ditch after ditch, flipped by a stray traffic cone that caused you to corkscrew your

The defining moment...

T-bone

As you progress through Career mode, you'll unlock a series of one-off racetracks, playful courses based on figures of eight, or loops with steeply banked walls and multi-tiered roads that are primed for collisions and aggressive jostling. The last one you'll meet is shaped like a dog's bone - two tight loops connected by a bumpy strip of gravel, which swiftly becomes a graveyard as two-way traffic starts to clog it up with showers of sparks and hectic jams.

The *FlatOut 2* thrill-o-graph

Grass!
The norm
Fish poo
The carnage of the first lap of a race.
"But wait! I came last?! Man, that sucks."
Relaxing into the fact that anything can happen.
"Right, I tried really hard, and still came fifth."
"Ah-ha. I came first... but mostly by accident."
START
END

Hot bus Enter 'GIEVCARPLZ' in the cheats menu for unlocked school bus. No need to slow down for children.
RESTARTING
CONTACT TIMER
44
SOFIA MARTINEZ
26

way off a rickety ramp. There's just no way to guarantee you'll win. It's initially a source of frustration, but is secretly all kinds of brilliant. See, the sense of equality you get in *FlatOut 2* is virtually unrivalled. Your AI opponents (seven on the track with you, each with their own persona and unintentionally hilarious mini-bio) are just as vulnerable to the game's bedlam as you are. They're not idiots, they do a damn fine of getting stuck in and you've just no idea what in the hell's going to happen on the next corner. Seeing someone come a cropper on a splintered billboard, before soaring into a tree with an impact that sends the driver through the windshield with a comedy yelp, is a fabulously silly pleasure. Not least because, come the next corner, it'll probably happen to you. Who needs to play online when you've got a convincingly suicidal bunch of challengers at hand?

What a fine mess

It's this unpredictability and anarchy that makes everything feel so organic next to the genetically-modified slickness of *Burnout*. One race you'll spend half a lap with a rival's car on your roof, or a lamppost through your windscreen; next race you'll get away with nary a scratch, but only come third; next, your car may get battered into a puttering scrapheap, but you'll still be able to power through to a daring last-second victory – after all, the only way to get nitro is to wreck other things, accidentally or otherwise. The only other racer that can compare in terms of emergent mayhem is Climax's raucous but limited *Crash 'n' Burn*. We definitely need more driving games where a sense of being bullied by the pack is replaced by all-out, equal-opportunity turmoil.

Given the immense violence present in *FlatOut 2* – lots of slapstick-nasty things happen to drivers, for example – why didn't the mainstream media rip it a new sunroof when on one of their kneejerk crusades? It's because, decent rock soundtrack aside, *FlatOut 2* is one of the least shouty action-racing games you'll ever meet, one that revels in making you grin rather than wince. It's so laid back that you've no choice but to get stuck in and smirk at whatever happens, while flinging yourself through morphing minefields of mischievous scrap at full pelt. Few games can make you feel like such a happy loser.

CLASSIC VERDICT

Why now? No other PS2 driving game manages to feel as enjoyably raucous and messy as this.
Final thought When Bugbear announces its first game for PS3, you'd best listen hard.

The Top 5

Flatout minigames

1 Bowling
FlatOut 2 offers 12 'Olympic' events, the best of which is Bowling. Crash your car, then send your avatar bursting through the windshield and steer them into the pins. Strike.

2 Stone-skipping
Launch your driver out nice and low, then tap a button with just the right timing to skim them across a tract of water. Dumb, blissful fun.

3 Ski jumping
Simple, but very, very effective in terms of compulsion... go on, steer that rag doll just a meter past the record.

4 American football
Dodge cardboard cut-out quarterbacks, and keep up enough speed to boost yourself over the posts.

5 Baseball
Land yourself square on the giant bat, and get bounced back up into the cheap seats of the stadium. Let's get a home run.

Eidos honour Croft legacy with Lara line-up

Lara is dutch, a 'gypsy at heart' and loves pasta. No, not Lara Croft, but Lara *Weller* (pictured second from right), who was the real-life Ms Croft for the release of *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* in 1999. Following the recent launch of *Tomb Raider Anniversary* on PS2, Eidos gathered together all the real-life Lara models since the series' debuted on Sega Saturn (not PSone) over 10 years ago, for a one-off photo shoot. Takes you back, no?

Way back in 1997, Rhona Mitra (not pictured - find out why on the bottom right) was the first model to fill the khaki shorts, before Nell McAndrew took over in 1998 – until she was fired for appearing in Playboy a year later. Replacement Lara Weller had previously been employed in a Dutch diamond emporium before landing the role.

Lucy Clarkson took over for the new millennium, playing Ms Croft for two years after being plucked from obscurity in a talent contest run by, oddly, a toothpaste manufacturer. Then Dutch girl Jill de Jong took the role of Lara from 2002, fulfilling the moodier image of *Angel Of Darkness*. And so we come to the current model, Karima Adebibe, who started in 2006, escaping sales assistant obscurity to travel the world having her picture taken with nervous fans. Talk about living the dream.

"Plucked from obscurity in a contest run by a toothpaste manufacturer"

LUCY CLARKSON (2004)

NELL MCANDREW (1998)

PLAYSTATION NATION

GameAmmo

"Karima Adebibe shares her birthday with Lara – Feb 14"

JILL DE JONG (2002)

LARA WELLER (1999)

KARIMA ADEBIBE (2006)

REPORTAGE

Rhona Mitra

Original Lara girl Rhona Mitra was the only model who didn't turn up to Eidos' *Tomb Raider* photo shoot, perhaps tied up by work commitments in the US where she's busy starring in Nip/Tuck as Detective Kit McGraw. Additionally, she's had starring roles in Boston Legal and recent Jim Carrey film The Number 23. Before her Hollywood recognition, she was merely (in)famous for having breast implants solely to play Lara. And if the CD of Croft-inspired tunes she released soon after landing the gig is anything to go by, she shouldn't consider going back to music...

ON THE DISC
Check out the PS2 reviews section for the latest games

PS2 Playlist

	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE
PUZZLERS	**FANTAVISION** **Pub** SCEI | **Dev** SCEI | **Web** playstation.com "Pump fireworks into the air, join them together and set them off. Stands up next to *Tetris*." **PSM3 Rating** 85%	**SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE** **Pub** Sega | **Dev** Sega **Web** sega.com/gamesite/smbdx "A *Marble Madness* clone except you're a monkey trapped in a ball – which is much better." **PSM3 Rating** 84%	**SUPER BUST-A-MOVE** **Pub** Acclaim | **Dev** Taito | **Web** n/a "Puzzle insanity that's super-slick, extremely addictive and easy to get into." **PSM3 Rating** 78%
BEAT-'EM-UPS	**SOUL CALIBUR II** **Pub** Namco | **Dev** Namco | **Web** soulcalibur.com "You can pull off highly impressive moves without memorising long sequences. A great fighting game." **PSM3 Rating** 93%	**TEKKEN 5** **Pub** Namco | **Dev** Namco | **Web** tekken5.namco.com "It's faster. It's nastier. It's 'blink-when-you're hit' gruesome stuff where you pay big for mistakes." **PSM3 Rating** 91%	**HYPER STREET FIGHTER 2** **Pub** Capcom | **Dev** Capcom | **Web** capcom.com "Every button press has an effect, every risk brings glorious reward or ignominious failure." **PSM3 Rating** 89%
FOOTBALL	**PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6** **Pub** Konami | **Dev** Konami Dynamics **Web** pesfan.com "A slower, more physical and realistic sim of football's highs and lows. Probably the best *Evolution* yet." **PSM3 Rating** 91%	**WINNING ELEVEN 10** **Pub** Konami | **Dev** KCET | **Web** pesfan.com "Once you master the passing game, you'll be stroking the ball around like Arsenal at their most fluid." **PSM3 Rating** 90%	**FIFA '07** **Pub** EA | **Dev** EA | **Web** easports.com "As a package, *FIFA* takes some beating. In terms of gameplay, it's still not *PES*, but it's just shy of excellent." **PSM3 Rating** 84%
EXTREME SPORTS	**SSX TRICKY** **Pub** EA | **Dev** EA | **Web** easportsbig.com "Edgy, funky, cool with outrageously compulsive gameplay and riotous effects. On the verge of perfection." **PSM3 Rating** 95%	**TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3** **Pub** Activision | **Dev** Neversoft | **Web** planettonyhawk.com "The greatest skater on PS2. Urban and instantly accessible, sparking online play and a pile of staggering surprises." **PSM3 Rating** 96%	**SSX 3** **Pub** EA | **Dev** EA **Web** easportsbig.com "A gleeful kinetic rush, twinning ace controls to excellent graphics." **PSM3 Rating** 94%

Hole in one PS2's top golfing contenders

SWEET

Everybody's Golf

Pub Sony | **Dev** Clap Hanz
Web everybodysgolfclub.com
The cutest, most whimsical, most relaxing sports game on PlayStation 2. Dogs and cats thwack balls about the course, birds sing, crickets chirp and, whatever the outcome, everyone goes home the best of friends. Sickeningly sweet.
PSM3 Rating 87%

SERIOUS

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005

Pub EA | **Dev** EA | **Web** easports.com
The best of the *Tiger Woods* games – that is, the last one before we realised that Electronic Arts were *definitely* recycling the same game, year in, year out, without change. Still PlayStation 2's best 'serious' golf sim, though.
PSM3 Rating 82%

STRINGY

Real World Golf

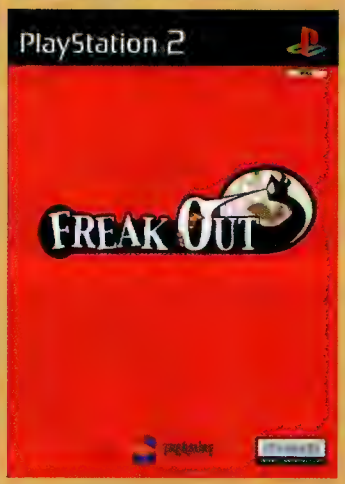
Pub In2Games | **Dev** Aqua Pacific
Web realworldgolf.com
The main draw of the ill-fated Gametrak system. Oh, you remember, the one where you wore special gloves with strings on, then waved your arms about in a swinging motion to hit the ball. A bit like Wii crossed with puppetry.
PSM3 Rating 74%

Disagree with our choices? Write us an explosive mail telling us why we're complete idiots. Lob your word bombs at psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "WRONG!"

Back issues
Complete your collection!
Ring our hotline on 0870 837 4773

Why didn't anyone buy...?

They released it... No-one bought it. We explain



Freak Out

Pub Swing | **Dev** Treasure
Web treasureentertainment.com

OK, deep breath. You're Linda. Linda has 12 sisters, which suggests her parents need lessons in contraception. These sisters are all incredibly vain, so much so that they've been possessed by the Demons Of Vanity and turned evil. Each sister has gone into hiding and can only be accessed via a pencil-sketched hub area called the Museum Of Agony. To protect themselves, each demon-girl has filled their level with baddies called the Bonitas. The Bonitas are all, without exception, women with breasts so enormous they can't see where they're going, but get near enough and they'll jump on you. Fortunately, you can beat them with your magic scarf. This scarf has the ability to grab the Bonitas' body parts and stretch them until they burst, or allows you to grab parts of the environment and catapult yourself to hard-to-reach areas. Then you have to defeat each demon-possessing sister by pulling at their various weak points until they can't take any more of the lunacy.

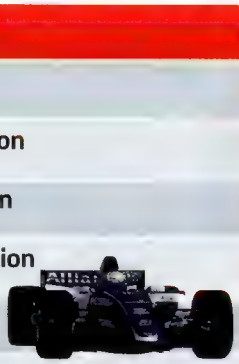
Now imagine trying to sell *that* concept to a public into urban crime-'em-ups and war games. Basically, as the sales figures show, it's an impossible task – although one not helped by the fact that, for all its sheer, brain-breaking insanity, *Freak Out* gets a bit too repetitive a bit too quickly. Still, it's worth a look if you see it second-hand. Just don't expect to understand it.

EMAIL PSM3 @
Want to champion a game here? Let us know.
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

PlayStation 3 Top 20

This month's big retail winners and losers

01	(01)	Spider-Man 3	Activision	Reviewed PSM89 72%
02	(02)	MotorStorm	Sony	Reviewed PSM86 88%
03	NEW	Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion	Ubisoft	Reviewed PSM87 93%
04	(03)	Resistance: Fall Of Man	Sony	Reviewed PSM86 89%
05	(05)	F1: Championship Edition	Sony	Reviewed PSM86 50%
06	(04)	Call Of Duty 3	Activision	Reviewed PSM86 82%
07	(06)	Virtua Tennis 3	Sega	Reviewed PSM86 85%
08	(07)	Fight Night Round 3	EA	Reviewed PSM86 78%
09	(09)	F.E.A.R.	Sierra	Reviewed PSM86 72%
10	NEW	NBA 2K7	2K Sports	Reviewed PSM88 69%
11	(08)	Ridge Racer 7	Sony	Reviewed PSM86 79%
12	(10)	Tiger Woods 07	EA	Reviewed PSM86 81%
13	(11)	Need For Speed Carbon	EA	Reviewed PSM86 58%
14	(12)	The Godfather: Don's Edition	EA	Reviewed PSM86 66%
15	(14)	Virtua Fighter 5	Sega	Reviewed PSM86 87%
16	(13)	Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom	Sony	Reviewed PSM86 59%
17	(20)	Sonic The Hedgehog	Sega	Reviewed PSM86 47%
18	(16)	Splinter Cell: Double Agent	Ubisoft	Reviewed PSM88 75%
19	(15)	Def Jam Icon	EA	Reviewed PSM86 49%
20	(17)	Blazing Angels	Ubisoft	Reviewed PSM86 52%



Want it? Tick it!

Web of intrigue

Hardly a surprise, but *Spider-Man 3* really isn't deserving of the number one spot. Listen to your spidey sense and stop buying this.

Court at it

Still no *FIFA*, still no *PES* – so in the meantime, you've all opted for basketball. This game's OK, but its NHL counterpart is rather better, you know...

The *Dark* rises

We know loads of you are really into RPGs, but really – there's only one role-player you should even consider, and that's *Oblivion*. Not this mediocre fare.

16,930,000

The number of games sold by Square Enix in the last financial year. *Kingdom Hearts* and *FF* are popular...

You're playing...

James Prideaux
Anger issues? No, James, of course you haven't... [eep]

1 **FIFA '07** "After being a *PES* guy, *FIFA* was like a breath of fresh air."
2 **Hitman: Blood Money** "Bit of a bad day? Walk into a room (in-game) and slaughter *everyone*."
3 **Crash 3: Warped** "The first game I owned was *Crash*. and then *Crash 2* was amazing. And *Crash 3* is one of my top games ever."

We're playing...

Richard Broughton
PS3 goodness, PS2 greatness, and something mediocre...

1 **The Darkness** "A fantastic game. Great design, gripping storyline... and some great swearing."
2 **God of War 2** "Sometimes as frustrating as it is brilliant, but I still love it nonetheless."
3 **Spider-Man 3** "And speaking of frustrating, how can a gang of emo girls beat up Spider-Man?"

They're playing...

Rob Yescombe
Free Radical's scriptwriter waxes lyrical for us.

1 **Spider-Man 3** "I generally ignore the missions and go for a swinging tour of New York."
2 **Splinter Cell: Double Agent** The quality of the script is streets ahead of *Chaos Theory*."
3 **Virtua Tennis 3** "They all look like wax. But if wax people want to play tennis then power to them."

ON THE DISC
Want to see the latest PSP games rated? Go here

PSP Playlist

	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE
DRIVING	**OUTRUN 2006: COAST 2 COAST** **Pub** Sega | **Dev** Sumo Digital | **Web** outrun2006.com "Sheer magical fun, from its ridiculous graphics to its stupidly colourful graphics. The most fun you'll have in ages." **PSM3 Rating** 89% 84%	**BURNOUT LEGENDS** **Pub** EA | **Dev** Team Fusion | **Web** ea.com "The best bits of *Burnout* 1, 2 and 3 on your PSP. How good is that? Bloody good. Brilliant, edgy and massively fast." **PSM3 Rating** 92% 87% 80%	**RIDGE RACER** **Pub** SCEI | **Dev** Namco **Web** namco.com "It's hard to imagine a better showcase for PSP's capabilities than *Ridge Racer*." **PSM3 Rating** 88% 72% 74% 79%
PLATFORMERS	**RATCHET AND CLANK: SIZE MATTERS** **Pub** Sony | **Dev** High Impact | **Web** us.playstation.com "Beautiful and frantic – an eye-to-brain feast that's luxuriously realised." **PSM3 Rating** 86% 65%	**DAXTER** **Pub** SCEE | **Dev** Ready At Dawn **Web** naughtydog.com "Looks and plays so much like *Jak 2* that it's a bit unnerving. Get it." **PSM3 Rating** 86% 69%	**MEGAMAN POWERED UP** **Pub** Capcom | **Dev** Capcom **Web** megaman.co.uk "Monstrously hard and requires the dexterity of a cyborg concert pianist. Playable." **PSM3 Rating** 78%
SHOOTERS/ SHOOT-EM-UPS	**KILLZONE: LIBERATION** **Pub** Sony | **Dev** Guerilla | **Web** killzone.com "The FPS has been ditched for a friendly 3D set-up. A massively enjoyable blaster that suits PSP perfectly." **PSM3 Rating** 85% 77% 79%	**SOCOM: FIRETEAM BRAVO** **Pub** SCEE | **Dev** Zipper | **Web** socom-game.com "*Fireteam Bravo* not only looks lush on the tiny screen, it handles like a dream as well. A seamless experience." **PSM3 Rating** 83% 78% 70%	**ACE COMBAT X** **Pub** Sony | **Dev** Namco | **Web** acecombatgame.com "Plenty similar to recent PS2 efforts, but the multi-player side makes it well worth a look." **PSM3 Rating** 80% 77%
ACTION	**GTA: VICE CITY STORIES** **Pub** Rockstar | **Dev** Rockstar | **Web** gtapsp.com "The miracle of playing such a big game on PSP makes VCS pretty special. The system's best yet." **PSM3 Rating** 91% 72% 70%	**GTA: LIBERTY CITY STORIES** **Pub** Rockstar | **Dev** Rockstar | **Web** gtapsp..com "Forehead-poppingly frustrating at times, *Liberty City Stories* is still a colossal beaut of a game." **PSM3 Rating** 90% 72% 75%	**SYPHON FILTER: DARK MIRROR** **Pub** SCEE | **Dev** SCEA | **Web** playstation.com "*Dark Mirror* lets you attack missions and enemy grunts in a way that suits your style – which makes it fun." **PSM3 Rating** 88% 70%

Let's get quizzical Quiz shows recreated on your console

BUZZING

Buzz: The Mega Quiz

Pub Sony | **Dev** Relentless
Web buzzthegame.com
Although the *Buzz* games are suffering from the law of diminishing returns, this is the best one yet, without too many stupid questions and an ace geography bit where a plane flies around a globe to land on the questions. Nice.
PSM3 Rating 74%

POINTLESS

Millionaire: Party Edition

Pub Eidos | **Dev** Eidos
Web millionairetv.com
In which Chris Tarrant asks you a load of questions which you don't get any money for answering correctly. The sort of game you play once at Christmas, then, rightly, never take out of the box again.
PSM3 Rating 53%

RETRO

Capcom Classics Collection 2

Pub Capcom | **Dev** Capcom
Web capcomclassics.com
CCC2 features *Quiz & Dragons*, a ludicrous RPG-cum-quiz game, where you pick between ninja, wizard and amazon characters... then answer questions about old Capcom games. Hmm.
PSM3 Rating 81%

Disagree with our choices? Write us an explosive mail telling us why we're complete idiots. Lob your word bombs at psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "WRONG!"

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Nice Apps

Trick up your console

Cam raider

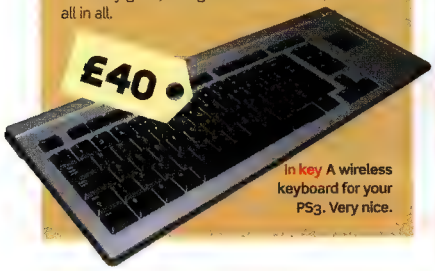
App Go! Cam
Web yourpsp.com
It's been out for ages in Japan, but PSP's Go! Cam is finally available in Europe. Go! Cam is a video/digicam for PSP, but at only 1.3 megapixels, it's not even as sharp as many mobile phone cameras. Still, it comes with a microphone and you can also download *Go! Edit*, an application that lets you create your own movie masterpiece, and add subtitles, sound effects and so on – or just spoon loads of stupid graphical embellishments onto your existing photos to make people look like idiots. It's not really worth the 35 notes, though, we reckon.

Live long

App 15-hour PSP battery
Web blueraven.com
PSP's battery life isn't the greatest, when you come down to it. Those frustrated by their games being cut short by a death of power should be interested in this, then – a 15-hour PSP battery. Now, it's quite bulky – incredibly so, in fact. It comes attached to a rubber shell which you have to slip your PSP into. Sounds bizarre, but this isn't as bad as it sounds – in fact, it's quite comfy and actually makes the handheld easier to hold. So providing you don't mind making your PSP bulkier than it is already (i.e. very), and can afford it, then this is worth investigating.

On board

App Logitech cordless mediaboard
Web logitech.com
A wireless keyboard – with a mouse pad attached – that works on your PlayStation 3, letting you type sweary insults at your fellow gamers during sessions on *Calling All Cars* from a distance of up to 30 feet. You can also use it, as Andy does, with bog-standard PCs. "It's very lightweight," he says, "but needs two AA batteries to work. It's definitely good, though." Recommended, all in all.



In key A wireless keyboard for your PS3. Very nice.

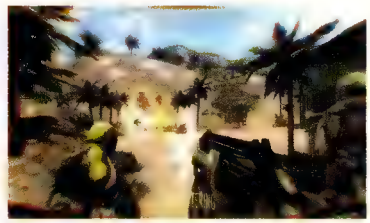
Early Warning System

Your PlayStation release schedule

Game	Publisher	Out	Format	Want it? Tick it!
Manhunt 2	Rockstar	July 6	PS2	☐
Transformers	Activision	July 20	PS3	☐
Surf's Up	Ubisoft	Aug 3	PS3	☐
Stuntman: Ignition	THQ	Aug 10	PS3	☐
Premier Manager '08	Zoo Digital	Aug 17	PS2	☐
Worms Open Warfare 2	THQ	Aug 24	PSP	☐
Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2	Ubisoft	Aug 31	PS3	☐
Lost	Ubisoft	Aug 31	PS3	☐
Alien Syndrome	Sega	Aug 31	PSP	☐
Monster Hunter Freedom 2	Capcom	Aug 31	PSP	☐
Brothers In Arms: Hell's Highway	Ubisoft	Aug 31	PS3	☐
FIFA '08	EA	Sep 7	PS3	☐
Stranglehold	Midway	Sep 7	[illegible]	☐
Medal Of Honor: Airborne	EA	Sep 7	PS3	☐
Warhawk	Sony	Sep 7	PS3	☐
Skate	EA	Sep 7	PS3	☐
Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights	THQ	Sep 21	PS3	☐
Blacksite: Area 51	Midway	Sep 28	PS3	☐
Hellboy	Konami	Sep 28	PS3	☐
Kane & Lynch: Dead Men	Eidos	Sep 28	PS3	☐
Haze	Ubisoft	Sep 28	[illegible]	☐
Ratatouille	THQ	Sep 28	PS3	☐
Dead Head Fred	D3P	Sep 28	PSP	☐
CSI: Three Dimensions Of Murder	Ubisoft	Sep 28	PS2	☐
The Club	Sega	Oct 5	PS3	☐
Frontlines: Fuels Of War	THQ	Oct 12	PS3	☐
Grand Theft Auto 4	Rockstar	Oct 19	PS3	☐
Pro Evolution Soccer 7	Konami	Oct 26	PS3	☐
Colin McRae: DIRT	Codemasters	Oct 26	PS3	☐
Silent Hill Origins	Konami	Oct 26	PSP	☐
Half-Life 2	EA	Nov 2	PS3	☐
Call Of Duty 4	Activision	Nov 2	PS3	☐
Clive Barker's Jericho	Codemasters	Nov 2	[illegible]	☐
WWE Smackdown Vs Raw 2008	EA	Nov 9	PS3	☐
Devil May Cry 4	Capcom	Nov 17	PS3	☐
PDC World Championship Darts	Oxygen	Nov 24	PS2	☐
Alone In The Dark	Atari	Dec 7	PS3	☐
Burnout Paradise	EA	Dec 14	PS3	☐
Tom Clancy's EndWar	Ubisoft	Dec 14	PS3	☐
The Wheelman	Midway	Dec 14	PS3	☐

Stranglehold

Or *Woo: The Videogame*, if you prefer. *Stranglehold* certainly looks the business, but whether it has the substance to go with the style remains to be seen.



Haze

Ubi's amazing-looking shooter is set to remain a PS3-exclusive for the remainder of the year, which is good news. Mark your calendar for this one's release.

Jericho

A horror shooter based round the Clive Barker novels. It's looking OK, but whether it'll be enough to keep us from *Resistance* is another matter entirely.

eBY Going, Going, Gone PlayStation auction action

Tony Hawk game and skateboard set

It's a copy of *Project 8* on PS2, plus a limited edition Hawk-designed skateboard and a certificate of authenticity. The skateboard is quite cool, if a little on the sparse-looking side of things, but this is certainly one of gaming's cooler pieces of merchandise.

Sold $20.50 **Original Price** $15.00
Profit $5.50

Organisation XIII outfit

Surely the very point of cosplay is to dress up as exciting, wildly imaginative characters in gaudy clothes? So why would you dress as one of *Kingdom Hearts*' Organisation XIII, whose fashion sense extends as far as leather coats like this, and no farther? Still, if you're off to a goth club in the coming weeks, you could do worse than this. It'll keep the rain off as well.

Sold Nope **Original Price**$68.00 **Profit** None

Kratos figurine

Now that's one excellent-looking action figure. It's *God Of War*'s Kratos, he's 13 inches tall, you can swap his right arm with a spare one holding up Medusa's head for the world to admire, and she's got light-up red LEDs for eyes. They won't turn you into stone though, although if you tried that with Milf you probably wouldn't notice the difference. Cracking and highly collectible.

Sold $45.20 **Original Price** $39.99
Profit $5.21

ON THE DISC
See what PS3 is capable of on your free DVD

PS3 Playlist

TOP THREE

ELDER SCROLLS 4: OBLIVION
Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Bethesda
Web elderscrolls.com
"An RPG offering an experience that no other PS3 title can lay claim to. It's not perfect, but feels close enough."
PSM3 Rating 93%

RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN
Pub Sony | **Dev** Insomniac
Web us.playstation.com
"An incredibly slick, exciting PS3 showcase. A beautiful vision of an alien-infested Britain. Terrific stuff."
PSM3 Rating 89%

MOTORSTORM
Pub Sony | **Dev** Evolution
Web motorstorm.com
"Tough, dynamic racing. A blistering thrill ride that makes good on all of PlayStation 3's promises."
PSM3 Rating 88%

FOUR TO SIX

VIRTUA FIGHTER 5
Pub Sega | **Dev** AM2
Web sega.com/vf5
"Perhaps the best scrapper ever, but *VF5* is *such* an acquired taste. Still, technically this is flawless."
PSM3 Rating 87%

VIRTUA TENNIS 3
Pub Sega | **Dev** Sumo
Web sega.com
"No online play, but still the best multi-player game on PS3. A must-buy for *Virtua Tennis* fans everywhere."
PSM3 Rating 85%

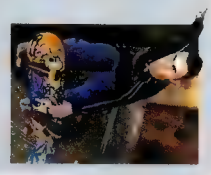
CALL OF DUTY 3
Pub Activision | **Dev** Treyarch
Web callofduty.com
"The only additions PS3 offers above the PS2 game is shinier, sharper graphics. Still, the next-gen starts here."
PSM3 Rating 82%

SEVEN TO NINE

TIGER WOODS 07
Pub EA | **Dev** EA
Web easports.com/tigerwoods07
"Still the best console golf game, but trapped in the bunker of its own success. It's all very familiar fare."
PSM3 Rating 81%

NBA STREET HOMECOURT
Pub EA | **Dev** EA Big
Web easports.com/nbastreet4
"More of a showing-off sim than anything, but a fun one at that. It makes you feel like The Man."
PSM3 Rating 80%

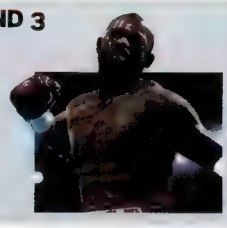
TONY HAWK'S PROJECT 8
Pub Activision | **Dev** Neversoft
Web tonyhawksproject8.com
"A solid, back-to-basics return to the glory days of the Hawk. He's still delivering the goods."
PSM3 Rating 80%



TEN AND ELEVEN

RIDGE RACER 7
Pub Sony | **Dev** Namco
Web ridgeracer7.net
"The ultimate *Ridge* – glowing with power and delivering exactly want you want."
PSM3 Rating 79%

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3
Pub EA | **Dev** EA
Web easports.com
"Fundamentally no different to the PlayStation 2 game, but worth it if you're new to *Round 3*."
PSM3 Rating 78%



PSM3'S MOST WANTED

BURNOUT PARADISE
Pub EA | **Dev** Criterion
Web ea.com/burnout/paradise
If this isn't one of PS3's slickest racers, we'll be amazed. Can't wait.

AVOID

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM: TARGET IN SIGHT
"This is one of the worst games we've played for ages. A disgrace on pretty much every level."
PSM3 Rating 28%

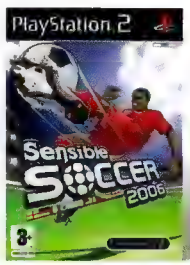
FULL AUTO 2: BATTLELINES
"A budget PlayStation 2 game wearing its big sister's high-definition make-up. Stick to *Burnout*."
PSM3 Rating 36%

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
"You'll start crying when you remember what Sonic games used to be like in the '90s."
PSM3 Rating 47%

Blasts from the past Old franchises brought up-to-date

HARD

R-Type Final
Pub Metro3D | **Dev** Irem
Web irem.co.uk
The '80s side-scrolling shooter comes to PS2, and it's as ridiculously hard as ever. The entire contents of space seem to attack your ship at once, and many a grown man has been reduced to shrieking like a spoilt baby after an *R-Type* session.
PSM3 Rating 79%



DISAPPOINTING

Sensible Soccer
Pub Codemasters | **Dev** Kuju
Web codemasters.com
One of our favourite childhood games gets updated, and botched to bits. A complete lack of atmosphere, awful tackling and hideous presentation combine to make a game that almost made us never want to watch football again.
PSM3 Rating 58%

CACK

Spy Vs Spy
Pub Take 2 | **Dev** WayForward
Web take2games.com
Rollicking multi-player booby trap-based laughs of yesteryear become a hollow shell of what went before, complete with a single player mode as pointless as a broken pencil factory and spies who used to be cool, but are now hateful. Bah.
PSM3 Rating 32%

Got a PS3 question? Then we'll answer it. Send your next-gen console queries to: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "PS3 question!"

Next month

The next incredible issue of PSM3 goes on sale Thursday, August 2

Now Showing

Movies for your console

DVD New on DVD

The Number 23

Director Joel Schumacher | **Starring** Jim Carrey, Virginia Madsen, Logan Lerman, Danny Huston

A slightly slow month for movie releases, this, of which Jim Carrey's turn as a bloke slowly driven loopy by conspiracy theories surrounding – yes – the number 23 is the most diverting. Talk about damning with faint praise.

UMD selection

Ghost Rider

Director Marc Johnson | **Starring** Nicolas Cage, Matt Long, Peter Fonda, Raquel Alessi

If it's a dry month for DVDs, it's positively Sahara-like for UMDs – but then, when isn't it? This month's best portable pick is Ghost Rider, the Nic Cage film of the comic book about a superhero motorbike riding ghost will a flaming skull for a head. While a good comic, the movie (like the recent PS2 game) is only just about acceptable. Can the Ghost Rider save the planet and defeat evil? Here's a clue: of course he bloody can.

Blu-ray choice

The Rock

Director: Michael Bay | **Starring** Sean Connery, Nicolas Cage, Ed Harris, John Spencer, David Morse

Oscar winning stuff in which FBI agent Stanley Goodspeed and ex-con John Mason – the only man ever to escape Alcatraz – are sent to infiltrate the prison island to stop General Francis Hummel, who's gone mad, taken hostages and is pointing a barracks-worth of gas warheads at San Francisco. Not necessarily the sort of movie to show off your Blu-ray player at its max, but definitely the sort of film you should watch at least once regardless.

PSM3 Tunes Where you get great music for free

Come Friendly Bombs

Gallows

Not, sadly, a rock version of the Betjeman poem made (even more) famous by Ricky Gervais in The Office. Still, beautifully harsh on the eardrums.

Get it: myfreedownload.co.uk/gallows

Testify

Switches

You might have heard their recent song, Lay Down The Law. This is far more mid-tempo and Britpop-inspired than that, but its still worth listening to a few times over.

Get it: myfreedownload.co.uk/switches

Out Of Reach

Funeral For A Friend

As emo as they come, of course – which keeps Andy happy – but that doesn't mean Out Of Reach doesn't rock like a rocking horse race meeting.

Get it: myfreedownload.co.uk/ffaf

Hang Me Up To Dry

Cold War Kids

Broody rock for people who like a show of intelligence. A bit emo once again, but still as catchy as chicken pox at a nursery school.

Get it: mtv2.com/#downloads

Belt Loops

The Films

Crunching indie-rock about love, loss and general heartbreak, in which the poor bloke a the centre loses his girl to "an unassuming sort of misfit". We've all been there, haven't we? Oh, we haven't.

Get it: freeindie.com

Tune-up Send us your music links and we'll stick 'em in the mag. Email: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "Music!"

Object of Desire

Expensive tech you know you need

PSM3 BUY IT

Viewsonic PJ258D iPod-compatible projector

Got a video iPod? Then perhaps you'll be interested in this: a high-quality projector with a dock for your MP3 player that'll project all your Kaiser Chiefs/Girls Aloud/Phil Collins/Vengaboys videos onto your wall in full on crisp-o-vision. And if that doesn't impress your girlfriend/mates/mum, we're not sure what will.

But of course, we're a PlayStation mag, so rest assured you can connect your PS3 up to this machine too. It supports 1080i – though not 1080p – so you can battle aliens in *Resistance* up to the height of your ceiling. It displays images in 2,000 lumens – that'll be a measurement of light, physics fans – so you shouldn't have to worry about the colours becoming all washed-out and murky. But fear not – you'll be able to adjust things like brightness and contrast, as well as several terrifyingly-complex things we've never heard of, like 'phase' and 'degamma', which we imagine excites some of you out there. It comes with a carry case too, so you can cart it over to your mates' houses. If you can be arsed.

You'll be able to watch your Blu-ray movies on it as well, of course, as well as do all those other things you've become accustomed to doing on your PlayStation 3 – only on a much, much bigger screen than before. Sounds like a worthwhile investment to us, frankly.

Tech Spec

Price £708
Features iPod video projection, 1080i support.
Web viewsonic.com

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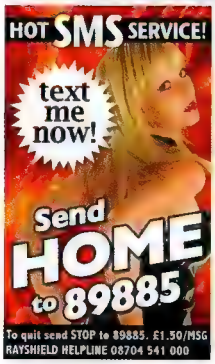

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5 things to remember this month

The *Pro Evo* dream is almost real
"We're just as excited about what they're not showing"
page 30

***Smackdown* may be back to its best**
"It needed a kick up the arse. It might have just got one"
page 20

Aliens know how to dance
"In *Destroy All Humans* PS3, Crypto can do 'the Robot'"
page 52

***The Darkness* isn't all that**
"Takes what could have been gold and turns it into bronze"
page 60

***Ninja Gaiden Sigma* is rock solid**
"The 'Game Over' screen should have been a vid of the developers cackling at you"
page 66

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Thursday August 2

1. **Stunning first look at *Killzone 2* – live report**
2. *Metal Gear Solid 4* – new screens and ‹fingers crossed› an early hands-on.
3. *Pro Evolution Soccer 2008* – more details on the football game we'd snap our PS2 to play.
4. *Grand Theft Auto IV* – all-new screens from Rockstar's PS3 opus.
5. *Skate* – world-exclusive review of the game that just might topple *Tony Hawk*.

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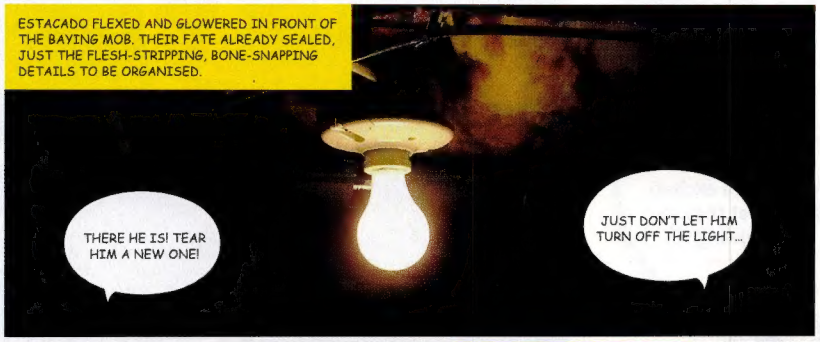
ABC PSM3 26,584
June to Dec 2006

The secrets of The Darkness

We know why the game's a bit bum - the comic was a bit 'confusing' too.*


ESTACADO FLEXED AND GLOWERED IN FRONT OF THE BAYING MOB. THEIR FATE ALREADY SEALED, JUST THE FLESH-STRIPPING, BONE-SNAPPING DETAILS TO BE ORGANISED.
THERE HE IS! TEAR HIM A NEW ONE!
JUST DON'T LET HIM TURN OFF THE LIGHT...

As you can see on page 60, *The Darkness* scored 71%, despite showing early promise. In order to make sense of it all, we retraced our steps and discovered that we completely overrated the appeal of the original graphic novel. It is, in fact, only a very *dark* comic because the publishers had a surplus of black pens. Here's an excerpt from one issue...

CLICK!
VENTING HIS ANGER, NO SOUL WAS SPARED, NO ATROCITY DEEMED TOO SEVERE...
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
OMIGOD! OH THE HORROR - THE UNIMAGINABLE HORROR OF BEING KILLED BY THE DARKNESS! IT REALLY IS TERRIBLE - DEAD VIOLENT!
IT WAS A DESTRUCTION OF APOCALYPTICAL PROPORTIONS...
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
SEXY GIRL ENEMY, HE'S STRIPPING YOU WITH HIS TENTACLES! NOW HE'S STROKING YOUR BOOBS! THE HORROR! THE SEXY HORROR!
WHAT'S THIS NOW?! HE'S PULLING GOD HIMSELF FROM THE HEAVENS AND PUTTING HIM IN A HEADLOCK! I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M SEEING THIS!"
'COUGH. I'VE BEEN TORN TO SHREDS IN THE MOST INVENTIVE WAY EVER, AND AS I FALL INTO THE NEVERENDING SLEEP I LAY MY HEAD ON THESE TWO PILLOWS...
HEY! THESE AREN'T PILLOWS!
'OH THE HORROR, THE HORROR, THE... HELLO? HELLOOOOOO? ANYONE ELSE ABOUT? IS IT ALL OVER? CAN I GO NOW?'
I BELIEVE IN A THING CALLED LOVE, JUST LISTEN TO THE RHYTHM OF YOUR HEART...

*Actual comic may vary. In fact, it's very, very good. See www.topcow.com

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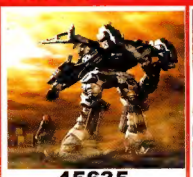
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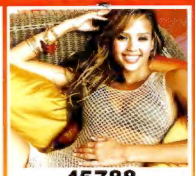
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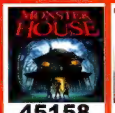
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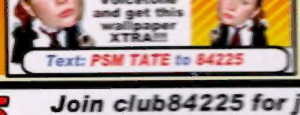

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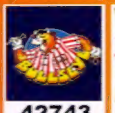
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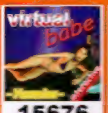

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